

الإسلام دين الفطرة

ISLAM IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT

*An open call to the sincere followers of Moses and Jesus,
true prophets sent by Allah, to encourage dialogue and
understanding amongst people of different faiths
in the spirit of tolerance and respect*

In this book, you will read:

- ❖ Islam's basic principles and characteristics
- ❖ Eleven facts about Jesus (may peace be upon him)
- ❖ Nineteen abandoned biblical teachings revived by Islam
- ❖ Twenty arguments refuting the doctrines of 'original sin' and redemption (absolution of sins through Jesus' sacrifice)
- ❖ Twenty six proofs from the Bible of Muhammad's prophethood

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Revised and Expanded 2009

NO DOUBT THIS LIFE IS AN EXAMINATION
WHICH NEEDS YOUR FULL CONSIDERATION
AS TO WHAT YOU WILL TAKE TO
YOUR FINAL DESTINATION
ONLY TRUE BELIEF AND GOOD DEEDS ARE
YOUR WAY TO SALVATION

(Muhammad Sherif)

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About the word *Lord*

The word *lord* in English has several related meanings. The original meaning is ‘master’ or ‘ruler’ and in this sense it is often used to refer to human beings: ‘the lord of the mansion’ or ‘*Lord* So-and-So’ (in the United Kingdom, for example). The word *Lord* with a capital L is used in the lexicon of Islam to refer to the One and Only God—Allah. In Islam, there is no ambiguity about the meaning of this word. While it is true that one may occasionally use the word lord (whether capitalized or not) to refer to a human being, in Islamic discourse the reference of this term is always clear from the context. Whereas for Christians, Hindus and other polytheists, the word Lord with a capital L may refer to Allah, to Jesus or to some imagined deity, for Muslims, there can be no plurality of meaning. Allah alone is the Lord, and the Lord is Allah – not Jesus, not Rama, not any other being.

The Editor

Preface

The wise man or woman knows that he/she is in existence for a purpose and a final destination, whether he/she knows that destination or not. Also, the wise man or woman knows that if s/he does not know where he or she is going then he or she will never arrive.

- ❖ In this little book, light is focused on:
- ❖ Why human beings were created
- ❖ What is their final destination?
- ❖ How to reach 'safely' to that destination

I would like to thank those respected scholars who gave me the chance to learn and quote extensively from their books, especially Dr. Jamal Badawi, Dr. Bilal Philips, Dr. Ahmed Deedat, Dr. Naji Arfaj and Brother Muhammad bin Abdullah Caraballo. My small contribution is mainly a compilation of passages from their wonderful works.

With this short preface I leave you with the book.

Kind regards

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Introduction

Each person is born into a religious environment that is not of his or her own choice; a child is raised in the religion or ideology of his or her family, society or culture. Even as a newborn, he or she is assigned the religion of his family or the ideology of the state; in some countries the child's assigned religion is even recorded on his or her birth certificate. By the time individuals reach their teens they usually have accepted the beliefs of their parents or that of their particular society, feeling that they have little choice in the matter.

However, individuals often encounter or are exposed to various beliefs and ideologies throughout the course of their lives leading many to question long-held beliefs, traditions or philosophical ideas. They begin to question the validity of their own beliefs. Seekers of truth often reach a point of confusion upon realizing that believers of every religion, sect, ideology and philosophy all claim to have the one and only truth.

There are only three possibilities. They are either all correct; all incorrect or only one is correct and the rest are incorrect. They cannot all be right since all religions are different in their fundamentals. Furthermore, the majority claim that they alone are correct and the rest are incorrect.

On the other hand, to claim that they are all incorrect is to deny that **Allah**¹ revealed His will to humankind. This proposition is absurd to those who believe in a Wise Creator. After all, why would Allah create human beings and then abstain from revealing a way to the truth? So, **which religion is the right one and how can the seeker of truth know it?** This is the main subject of this work.

In beginning one's search for which religion is true, one should keep four things in mind:

First, Allah gave us the ability and intellect to discover the answer to this crucial question, which is also a life-changing decision: **WHAT IS THE TRUE RELIGION?**

Second, Allah, the Most Compassionate, did not leave us to go astray without any guidance. Indeed, He sent us prophets with scriptures to show us the right path.

1. Although the English word 'God' is often used interchangeably in this book with the word *Allah*, there is a difference. 'Allah' is the word in Arabic that is translated as 'God'. However, 'Allah' has a much more precise meaning than 'God'. 'Allah' is not merely an Arabic term for the word "god". Actually, the root word of the word 'Allah' is '*ilāh*', which means 'a god', and there are countless numbers of made-up 'gods', but only One True God whose name is Allah. The word 'Allah' literally means 'the worshipped'. Allah is thus the proper name for the *only Being that is worthy of worship*, the True Creator of the universe. By saying "Allah", Muslims are, in essence, negating every other entity which people wrongfully worship. Therefore, in this work, the term 'Allah' will often be used in reference to this One and Only God who is worthy of worship.

Third, always remember the reason for this search: the everlasting life to come depends on finding the true religion in this life. This should be your ultimate motivation, and a driving force to keep you searching until you are completely satisfied.²

Fourth, one can determine the true path and make a rational and correct decision only if emotions and prejudices, which often blind one to reality, are put aside.

2. The Bible, in its present form, confirms that seeking the truth is the main cause for salvation. It states in John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Muslims believe that the existing form of the Bible contains elements of the original true message, though it has been altered significantly.

I. Proof of Allah's Existence

This Great Universe and everything that is in it cannot be the product of chance, and could not have created itself. Signs testifying that Allah is the only Creator can be seen throughout the earth and in the very soul of each person. Allah says in the Qur'an:

*[It is Allah who created the sky and the earth, and sent down from the sky water by which He brought forth fruits for your sustenance. He subjected for you the ships to sail upon the sea at His command, and He subjected for you the rivers. And He subjected for you the sun and moon in continuous cycles, and He subjected for you the night and day. And He gave you all you asked Him for...]*³ (Qur'an 14: 32-34)

In the Qur'an, Allah mentions Prophet Abraham's (peace be upon him)⁴ search for truth as an example of

3. All translations of the meanings of verses of the Qur'an are adapted from the English translation of the meanings given in the "King Fahd Holy Quran Printing Complex" version.

4. This is an expression of respect which prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) recommended to say each time a prophet is mentioned.

how those who follow Allah's signs will be rightly guided to the worship of Him alone; Allah says:

[In this way I showed Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that he would have faith with understanding and certainty. When the night covered him with darkness, he saw a star and said: This is my Lord, but when it set, he said: I do not like those that set. When he saw the moon rising up, he said: This is my Lord, but when it set, he said: Unless my Lord guides me, I will certainly be among the people who have gone astray. When he saw the sun rising up he said: This is my Lord, this is the greatest of all. But when it set, he said: O my people! I am indeed free from what you join as partners with Allah. Verily, I have turned my face towards Allah who created the heavens and the earth and I reject those who associate partners with Allah (in worship).] (Qur'an 6: 75-79)

The strongest proof for Allah's existence is through the creation itself. Thus, one will see that Allah continuously instructs humankind to look to the universe, as this will affirm the divine truth of His existence, His greatness and that He alone should be worshipped.

Another obvious fact: **He answers our prayers.** Sometimes once the individual prays (supplicates) to Allah; He answers his prayer, and this is an indication of Allah's existence. Allah says in the Qur'an:

[Your Lord says: 'supplicate to me, and I will answer your supplication'.] (Qur'an 40: 60)

II. The Purpose of Creation

Have you ever wondered about the reason for our existence? Have you ever wondered why we die, and where we go after death? What will happen to us in the end? Have you ever asked yourself why Allah made the earth and all that is in it under the human being's dominion? Why were the night and the day, and the sun and the moon created? What are we supposed to do during our lifetime? Were we created just to eat, drink, and enjoy ourselves before we die? A poet summarizes this timeless question:

I do not know whence I have come.

I saw my feet walking on the road.

As they please I go and stop.

What am I doing here?

How did the road find me?

I do not know! I do not know! I do not know!

Allah has emphasized in many verses of the Qur'an⁵ that He did not create people without purpose. He says:

5. The Qur'an is the sacred Book or scripture revealed to Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of God be upon him). A detailed explanation of the Qur'an is given in chapter IX (The six articles of faith).

*[What! Do you think that I created you simply in jest? And that you would not be returned to Me?]*⁶
(Qur'an 23: 115)

He also says:

[What! Does man think that he will be left to roam at his will?] (Qur'an 75: 36)

In addition, He says:

[Do people think that they will be left to say: We believe, and they will not be held accountable?]
(Qur'an 29: 2)

It is clear from these verses that human beings were not created without a purpose, and this purpose is mentioned clearly in another verse which says:

[I have not created the Jinn and humankind except to worship Me.] (Qur'an 51: 56)

Hence, the main purpose of creation is **TO WORSHIP THE CREATOR ALONE**. This is called Monotheism.

Islam sets a vision for humans which is strikingly simple yet completely logical. Indeed, why would the

6. Please note that any quotation in this book from the Qur'an is the translation that we feel has the closest meaning to its original Arabic. The translation is not the Qur'an itself.

Creator of the universe leave the one main message He wanted humankind to understand, the one key to redemption, a total mystery? How, then, would He expect humankind to arrive at the truth? It is clear that humankind must revert to its basic instinct regarding the Creator of the Universe, shedding the layers of indoctrinated ideologies and man-made teachings he has been covered with. He must reclaim his birthright: He must reclaim *Islam*.

III. Monotheism, the Message Of All Prophets

All prophets told their people to worship Allah alone (Monotheism) and shun worshipping His creation (Paganism). Allah says:

[I assuredly sent among every people a messenger with the command: Worship Allah and avoid worshipping false gods.] (Qur'an 16: 36)

Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him)⁷, for example, believed in One God (Allah), Who has no partner. The Qur'an explains:

[And Abraham said to his people: worship Allah and be pious to Him, this is better for you if you understand.] (Qur'an 26: 16)

Allah also says about him:

[And behold, Abraham said to his father and his people: I indeed clear myself of what you worship except from worshipping Him who created me, and He will certainly guide me.] (Qur'an 43:26-27)

7. See footnote 4.

Though the Bible has been altered a great deal, Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was reported in the Gospels to have said: "It is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve⁸ Him only." (Luke 4:8)

It also mentions that God says: "I am the first, and I am the last, and besides Me there is no God." (Isaiah 44:6)

"The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark 12:29)

The Book of Acts 3:13 says: "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus"

Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) also said (as mentioned in the Qur'an) to his people:

[Indeed, those which you worship besides Allah are only names that you and your forefathers have named (fabricated), for which Allah has sent down no authority. The command belongs only to Allah. He has commanded that you worship none but Him. That is the right religion, but most people do not understand.] (Qur'an 12: 40)

8. The use of the word 'servant' does not imply that God is in need of assistance or help. It means 'the one devoted in worship' by obeying His commands and shunning what He forbids.

This is why Allah described those who deviate from Abraham's message (Monotheism) as fooling themselves, He says:

[Those who reject the religion of Abraham make fools of themselves.] (Qur'an 2: 130)

IV. The Basic Message of Islam

The basic message of Islam is the same message of all the previous prophets: worship Allah **alone** and avoid worshipping anything besides Him, whether it is a person, place or thing, directly or indirectly, secretly or openly. This basic principle of Monotheism is contained in the opening chapter of the Qur'an, known as "The Opening", verse 5:

[You alone we worship and from You alone we do seek help.]

Allah also says:

[Worship Allah and do not associate partners with Him.] (Qur'an 4: 36)

[Whoever disowns [disbelieves in] false gods and believes in Allah, has grasped the most trustworthy handhold [that will never break].]
(Qur'an 2: 256)

Muhammad, (peace be upon him) the last Prophet, is reported to have said: <<Anyone who says: There is none

worthy of worship other than Allah, and dies holding that belief, will be granted paradise.>>⁹

9. Narrated by Bukhari (5827) and Muslim (94). **Note:** *Saheeh al-Bukhâri* and *Saheeh Muslim* are two collections of the authentic, documented traditions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him). Other collections are also used as references in this book.

V. Proof That *Only* Allah Deserves Worship

Here is an obvious fact: **Allah is the sole Creator and Sustainer of everything.** This makes Him the only one deserving of your worship. It's really that simple. Supplication, for example, is an act of worship, where the individual direct his heart to Allah and ask his needs. Allah instructs in the Qur'an to call Him,

[And your Lord says: Call on Me and I will answer your prayer.] (Qur'an 40: 60)

The question then arises as to why people direct their worship to created objects, such as idols. The fact is, the idol has no power of its own, and anything which results from that act of worship only comes about through the permission of Allah. Hence, if a person prays to an idol and his prayers are answered, it is not the idol which actually answered his prayers but Allah. Similarly, prayers to Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), Buddha, Krishna, Saint Christopher, Saint Jude or to Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace be upon him), are not answered by them, but are answered by Allah. Consequently, prayer directed to anyone or thing other than Allah is of no avail.

The same applies for all acts of worship like prayers, charity and fasting. All have to be directed to Allah alone.

The prophets were very explicit in their teachings that only Allah is to be worshipped, and that they themselves were sent to teach this very message. They claimed neither fame nor status, and never once did they teach the people to direct acts of worship to them. Instead, the prophets warned their people against doing just that. For example, Islam teaches that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was a human being who was created by Allah in a miraculous way. He was born of a mother, Mary, without a father and he worshipped Allah. He was not God (Allah), nor was he the son of God. He was not one of three manifestations of God as Christians say, nor was he the son of a prostitute as some Jews have said. He told his people (the tribes of Israel) to worship Allah alone. He did not tell people to worship either himself or his mother. Furthermore, the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) did not worship himself when he worshipped: he worshipped Allah alone.

However, those who claim to be the followers of Jesus Christ actually do something other than what he taught: they worship Jesus himself. Others worship Mary, claiming she is the mother of Allah. If Jesus did not instruct them to worship him or his mother, how can one

do this very act and yet claim to be following his message?

Allah says in the Qur'an:

[Surely, they have disbelieved who say: Allah is the Messiah (Jesus), the son of Maryam (Mary). But the Messiah said: O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Verily, whoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode, and for the wrongdoers (polytheists), there are no helpers.] (Qur'an 5: 72)

Allah also says in the Qur'an that He will ask Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) on the Day of Judgment regarding the Christians' worship of him and his mother:

[O Jesus, son of Mary! Did you tell people: Take me and my mother as gods besides Allah? Then he [Jesus] will say: Glory be to You, I could never say what I had no right to say. If I had said it, You would have known it, You know what is within myself, but I do not know what is within Yourself. Verily, You alone are the Knower of the unseen. I did not say to them except what You commanded me: to worship Allah, my Lord and

your Lord; and I was a witness over them as long as I was among them, but when You raised me up, You were the observer over them, and You are the witness over all things.] (Qur'an 5: 116 - 117)

Prophet Jesus was given life, was born from a woman's womb, and was circumcised. He felt hunger, pain, and weariness. Since all these attributes are those of human beings and not those of God (Allah), it is clear that Jesus was not God (Allah).

Similarly, Buddha was a reformer who introduced a number of humanistic principles into the Hindu religion practiced in India. He did not claim to be God, nor did he suggest to his followers that he be worshipped. Yet, today most Buddhists have made him their God and they prostrate themselves before idols representing his likeness. Furthermore, over the ages, in the supposedly monotheistic religions like Judaism and Christianity, followers have allowed a select few human beings to be accorded the status of a law-giver where those laws are in direct contradiction to Allah's Laws, as has become the case with their rabbis and church officials. This is a form of creature-worship. Allah mentions:

[They took their rabbis and monks to be their lords besides Allah.] (Qur'an 9: 31)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explained this verse to mean that by unquestioningly obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their desires, without being ordered by Allah, they have given these rabbis and priests the status of deities. In brief, from the perspective of the object worshipped, all religions today [except Islam] invite people to the worship of creation, in one form or another!

It shall be noted that some (non-Muslim) people incorrectly label Islam as “Mohammedanism”. This phenomenon exists because it is tempting to elevate Muhammad to a status far above his teachings, as in the case of all other religions. This is ironic since his very message was the negation of equating man (*any* man) with Allah. Islam teaches that Muhammad was a human messenger, who, including himself, is required to worship Allah rather than to be elevated to the status of Allah and be worshipped. Muhammad was a messenger *and* a slave¹⁰ for Allah, and that is all.

Allah's attributes show that He alone deserves worship.

10. The status of “slave” to Allah is the most beloved and honoured position before Allah since it implies sincere worship and love to Him. This status applies for all messengers and true followers.

He is One, without relatives; He has no father, son, mother or wife. He is the Eternal Absolute. He neither gives birth, nor is He born, and there is nothing like Him. He is perfect in His knowledge, in His power, in His will, in His mercy and in all His other attributes. Allah is all-powerful and perfect, while human beings are weak and imperfect. That is how He defined Himself and how all prophets defined Him.¹¹ Therefore, it is only befitting that one directs all acts of worship to the One who fits this description. Worshipping anything else would be futile.

Another proof is that Islam teaches that every soul is imbued with the awareness of Allah and a natural inclination towards worshipping Allah alone. In the Qur'an, Allah explained that when He created Adam (peace be upon him) He caused all of Adam's descendants to come into existence and then He took a pledge from all of them saying:

*[Am I not your Lord? To which they all replied:
Yes, we testify to it.] (Qur'an 7: 172)*

11. This agrees with what is mentioned in the Gospel of Barnabas, chapter 17, where Jesus said: "He alone hath no equal. He hath had no beginning, nor will he ever have an end, but to everything hath He given a beginning, and to everything shall He give an end. He hath no father nor mother; He hath no sons nor brethren nor companions."

Allah then explained why He had all of humankind bear witness that He is their Creator and the only true God, the only one worthy of worship:

[That is in case you, humankind, may say on the Day of Resurrection: Indeed we were unaware of this.]

Allah further elaborated on this point saying:

[It is also in case you may say: It was our ancestors, who invented partners with Allah, and we are only their descendants, will you then destroy us for what those liars did?] (Qur'an 7: 172-173)

Therefore, people who associate partners with Allah in worship cannot claim on that day that they had no idea that Allah is the only one who deserves to be worshipped.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reported that Allah has said: <<I created my slaves following the right religion, but devils made them go astray.>>¹² Also, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: <<Each child is born in a state of Islam. Then his parents make him a Jew, Christian or a Zoroastrian.>>¹³ Thus, Islam is the **birthright** of every human being, since every child is born with a natural belief in the existence of Allah and an

12. Narrated by Muslim (2865)

13. Narrated by Bukhari (1385) and Muslim (2658)

inborn inclination towards worshipping Him alone. Just as the child submits to the physical laws which Allah has imposed on this physical world, in the same way its soul also submits naturally to the fact that Allah is the only Lord and Creator. But if his/her parents are following a different path, the child is usually not strong or aware enough to recognize the truth or resist the will of the parents. In such cases, the religion the child follows is one of custom and upbringing. But Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate, will not hold him to account or punish him for following a false religion before he reaches the age of reason and is exposed to the pure message of Islam.

To sum up, one can naturally, without the aid of other human influence, come to the conclusion that only Allah deserves to be worshipped. This conclusion is not confusing or elaborate; it can be arrived at by even the most uneducated.

VI. The Message of False Religions

False religions, on the other hand, all teach **the worship of creation (Paganism)** in one way or another. Some religions call to idolatry indirectly while proclaiming Allah's unity, while others openly call to the worship of other gods besides Allah or along with Allah, instead of calling to the worship of Allah alone (pure Monotheism). Idolatry is the greatest sin that a human being can commit because it diverts worship from the Creator to His creation. It necessarily implies elevating the creation to the status of Allah and thus equating creation with Him. This explains why idolatry is the greatest sin a human being can commit. One who dies in a state of idolatry has sealed his or her fate in the next life. Allah states in the Qur'an:

[Verily, Allah will not forgive joining partners with Him, but He may forgive sins less than that for whomsoever He wishes.] (Qur'an 4: 48 & 116)

Humans should not worship other than Allah because it makes no sense to worship the creation which is weak in nature and neglect the Creator who controls this creation and the whole universe! Not only is this act

misdirected and futile, it is a manifestation of ungratefulness to the One who created everything. Allah says in the Qur'an:

[Do they attribute to Me partners who created nothing, but are themselves created? They can neither help others nor can they help themselves. And if you call them to guidance they will not follow you. It is the same for you whether you call them or you keep silent. Certainly, those whom you call upon besides Allah are slaves like yourselves. So call upon them and let them answer you if you are truthful. Do they have feet with which they walk, hands with which they hold, eyes with which they see? Or do they have ears with which they hear?] (Qur'an 7: 191-195)

Some idol worshippers try to justify what they are doing by saying, "We treat idols as mediators and intercessors between us and Allah." This belief is based on the false comparison between Allah and kings, who often operate using mediators between them and their people. This is an incorrect belief because Allah does not need mediators between Him and people. He hears and knows everything, and can respond directly to all the needs of His creation. In hundreds of Qur'anic verses, Allah invites humans to have a direct relationship with Him without any

mediator or intercessor, and He prohibits them from worshipping anything other than Him under any circumstances.

The idea of having different deities (idols and statues) as intermediates and mere “channels” is as old as time. Many non-Muslims before the time of the Prophet Muhammad claimed that they believed in Allah as the Creator and Sustainer; however, they said that they merely used idols as a means of drawing closer to Allah or as a means of having prayers answered. This is still a common practice amongst many people today; they say they believe in one God, yet they maintain their reliance upon statues, superstitions and other symbols (or traditions) as a way to worship and invoke God for their needs.

Allah rejects their claims, saying that when they are in trouble, whom do they call? They call none other than Allah. This is evidence that the concept of intercessors between a human being and God is false and of no benefit.

Allah says that anyone who attributes deity to others with Him will be left with that other entity on the Day of Judgment, calling to that entity for help. Common sense dictates that this, in fact, is the very reason why these entities are assigned by human beings in the first place. The person has a false hope that this entity will somehow

be able to help him when needed. But this is of no avail because the entities themselves will disassociate from the person on the Day of Judgment (when one is in need of most help). It will be asked of these people:

[Where are those whom you used to invoke and worship besides Allah? [They will reply:] They have vanished and deserted us. And they will bear witness against themselves, that they were disbelievers.] (Qur'an 7: 37)

Allah says:

[Say [O Muhammad]: Call upon those whom you assert (to be associate gods) besides Allah, they possess not even the weight of an atom—either in the heavens or on the earth, nor have they any share in either, nor is there for Him any supporter from among them.] (Qur'an 34: 22)

So if these other entities “control not even the weight of an atom”, how can they help the one who worshipped them? Moreover, Allah points out the simple fact that,

[...those whom you call upon besides Allah cannot help you nor can they help themselves.]
(Qur'an 7: 197)

Allah, the Most Wise, did not prescribe religious beliefs and rites for people that would affect the direct

relationship between Himself and humans, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, baptism, confession, or belief in man as a saviour or an intermediary. This further emphasizes that the truth can be found by anyone, regardless of his place and time. Indeed, this personal relationship between Allah and His creation is proof of Allah's very existence.

VII. Allah and His Creation

Islam emphasizes that Allah and His creation are distinctly different entities. Allah is neither part of His creation nor does He intermix with it. His creation is neither equal to Him in His attributes nor a part of Him. Indeed, Allah is the Most High; He is above all His creation, above the heavens and above His Throne, as He informed us about Himself in the Qur'an and in the previous scriptures. This might seem obvious, but people's worship of creation instead of the Creator is to a large degree based on ignorance or negligence of this fact. The wrong belief that the essence of Allah is everywhere in His creation or that He is a part of His creation, has provided justification for the worship of Allah's creation. Philosophical idol worshippers justify their idolatry by saying that they do not actually worship the stone or metal image, but Allah who becomes concentrated in it during their rituals of worship. They claim that the stone idol is only a focal point for Allah's essence and is not Allah itself! Anyone who accepts the concept of Allah being present in any way within His creation will be obliged to accept this argument in justification of idolatry.

Setting aside motivations such as financial gains or fame, people's claims to divinity have largely manifested based on the mistaken belief that it is possible for Allah to be present in humans. Taking this belief one step further, they claim that Allah is more present in them than in others, and people should therefore submit to them and worship them as Allah's incarnate or as Allah concentrated within their person. Similarly, those who have asserted that others were gods have found fertile ground among those who accept the false belief of Allah's presence in human beings.

As far as the doctrine of incarnation held by late Christians is concerned, it was developed after Jesus' departure. It was incorporated into Christianity from paganism. In the mythology that preceded Christianity, it can be seen how some heroes were considered to be gods.

The vast majority of Christians today pray to Jesus, claiming that he is God (Allah). The philosophers among them claim that they are not worshipping Jesus the man, but God (Allah) who was manifest in Jesus the man. This is also the rationale of pagans who bow down in worship to idols. As mentioned before, when a pagan philosopher is asked why he worships an idol which was made by human hands, he replies that he is not really worshipping the idol. Furthermore, he may claim that the idol is only a

focal point for the presence of Allah, and thereby claim to be worshipping Allah who is manifest in the idol, and not the physical idol itself. There is little or no difference between that explanation and the answer given by Christians for worshipping Jesus. The origin of this deviation lies in the false belief that Allah is present in His creation. Such a belief (erroneously) justifies the worship of Allah's creation.¹⁴

Islam has freed its followers from such superstitions by rejecting the doctrine of the incarnation. The Divinity of Jesus has been rejected in the noble Qur'an in many verses. Let us take two of them:

[Surely, they have disbelieved who say: Allah is the Messiah [Jesus], the son of Maryam [Mary].]
(Qur'an 5: 72)

[Say: He is Allah the One (in His essence). Allah is the eternal absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.]
(Qur'an 112: 1-4)

These two verses mean that neither Jesus nor any other prophet resembles Him in an attribute or in essence, and hence nothing can be an incarnation of Allah.

14. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, by Dr. Bilal Philips, p.69

Consider the following. In the south-eastern region of the Amazon jungle in Brazil, South America, a primitive tribe erected a new hut to house their main idol Skwatoo, representing the supreme God (Allah) of all creation. The following day a young man entered the hut to pay homage to his god. While he was prostrating to what he had been taught was his creator and sustainer, a mangy, old and flea-ridden dog slunk into the hut. The young man looked up just in time to see the dog lift its hind leg and pass urine on the idol. Outraged, the young man chased the dog out of the temple, but when his rage died down, he realized that the idol could not be the Lord of the Universe. He came to the conclusion that God must be elsewhere. As strange as it may seem, the dog urinating on the idol was a sign from God for that young man that his idol did not deserve to be worshipped. This sign contained the divine message that what he was worshipping was false. It liberated him from following his tradition unquestioningly, a tradition that proved to be erroneous. As a result, this man was given a choice: either to seek the true God or to continue in the error of his ways. This example illustrates

the fact that humans are capable at arriving at the truth on their own, regardless of society, etc.¹⁵

Clearly, if one is to follow this argument, it means that either God does not have the attributes he claims or that God is no different than his own creation. Both negate the idea of an All-Powerful God, so both must be false. Islam teaches that God is too great and perfect to lower Himself to a level of likeness to His creation or mixing with them.

To conclude, all false religions have in common one basic concept with regard to God: that God and His creation are one. They either claim that all humans are God, or that specific people are God, or that nature is God, or that God is a figment of people's imagination, or that a person or being is a mediator between people and God (as mentioned in previous chapter). Thus, by equating the two, it may be said that false religions invite humans to worship the creation instead of worshipping the Creator

15. *The True Religion*, by Dr. Bilal Philips

VIII. The Meaning of The Religion's Name, 'Islam'

Further evidence that Islam is the true religion is from the meaning of the word 'Islam' itself. Basically, the word 'Islam' is an Arabic word that denotes submission and obedience. As a religion, Islam has two meanings; general and specific. Islam in general, refers to the religion which God revealed to all prophets: The worship of God alone (Monotheism) and the avoidance of paganism. This explains why in the Qur'an all prophets call themselves Muslims. According to the Qur'an all prophets were Muslims, what they taught was nothing but earlier versions of Islam, and their sincere followers were Muslims as well.¹⁶ Consequently, one should not regard Islam as an innovation that was brought by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), but as the original message of Allah (in its fundamentals) to all prophets throughout history. Specifically, the word Islam also refers to the religion that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad

16. Jesus (peace and blessing be upon him) was reported to have said in the Bible: 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.' (Matthew 5:17-18).

(peace be upon him). None of the previous religions were **specifically given** this name by Allah, except for this last religion – Islam.

Islam was not named after a person or a group of people, nor was it decided upon by later generations of humans. Indeed, the name ‘Islam’ was given by Allah Himself as is clearly mentioned in the Qur’an in many verses, for example:

[Indeed, the only religion accepted by Allah is Islam.] (Qur’an 3: 19).

On the other hand, Christianity was named (by its followers) after Jesus Christ, and Judaism after the tribe of Judah. However, it is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible that the religion of the followers of Prophets Isaac and Moses (peace and blessing be upon them) and their descendants is called Judaism, or that the religion of the followers of Christ¹⁷ is called Christianity. In other words, the names ‘Judaism’ and ‘Christianity’ had no divine origin or approval. It was not until long after Jesus’

17. Both the names ‘Jesus’ and ‘Christ’ are derived from Hebrew words, through Greek and Latin. Jesus is the English equivalent and Latin form of the Greek ‘Iesous’, which in Hebrew is ‘Yeshua’. ‘Christos’ is a Greek translation of the Hebrew ‘messiah’, and the Arabic ‘masaha’ which means to rub, to massage, to anoint.

ascension¹⁸ that the name ‘Christianity’ was given to the religion of those claiming to be his followers. The same applies for Buddhism, which was named after Gautama Buddha, Confucianism after Confucius, and Hinduism after the Persian word for India, ‘Hind’, and so on.

Another reason for calling Christians, Buddhists and others as such is because their followers worship them (in the case of Christ and Buddha). However, Muslims are not called ‘Muhammadans’ because Muslims do not worship Muhammad; they worship ‘Allah’ and submit to Him alone. In fact, this phenomenon of naming an ideology after a person has become so common that many mistakenly label Islam as “Mohammedanism”, although Muslims have never used, nor do they accept, such a label.

18. The Qur’an mentions that Jesus (peace be upon him) was neither killed nor crucified on a cross, but Allah raised him up to the heavens. Jesus (peace be upon him) will come again before the end of this world. More discussion on this subject is mentioned later in this book.

IX. The Six Articles of Islamic Faith

Islamic belief is based on six fundamental articles of faith.

1. Belief in Allah.

This includes the following beliefs:

- ❖ Belief in Allah's existence. The existence of humankind and the entire universe is not a mere accident or the product of chance. This universe and everything that is in it manifests and points to the realization of a Creator.
- ❖ Belief that Allah is the Creator, the Sustainer, the Owner of the Universe and its contents, the provider of everything, the Giver of life and the Causer of death.
- ❖ Belief that Allah is the only One who has the right to be worshipped.
- ❖ Allah has revealed both in His Final Revelation, the Qur'an and through his Prophet's teachings ninety-nine names and attributes that offer some insights into the absolutely unique, wondrous and perfect nature of Allah. The most frequently used name is Allah, which means the 'Worshipped'. Some of those attributes are: the Everlasting, All-Powerful, All-Knowing, All-

Hearing, All-Seeing, Self-Sufficient and Self-Sustaining. Allah Almighty is above all comprehension, and He does not resemble His creation, Allah says in the Qur'an:

[There is nothing like Him] (Qur'an 42: 11).

He also says:

[Say (O Muhammad): He is Allah the One (in essence). Allah is the Eternal Absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.] (Qur'an 112: 1-4)

He is the most Rich, in the sense of 'free of all needs'. He says in the Qur'an:

[I have not created the Jinn and humankind except to worship Me. I require neither provision nor feeding from them. Surely Allah¹⁹ is the All-provider, the Possessor of all strength, the Firm.] (Qur'an 51: 56-58)

Allah's ninety-nine names are all mentioned in the Qur'an and the statements of the Prophet (peace be upon him). The most frequently used is (Allah), which means the 'worshipped'. The attributes are many and are also

19. The name 'Allah' is how God Almighty refers to Himself in the Qur'an, and how the prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) also referred to Him.

mentioned in the Qur'an and the statements of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

2. Belief in the Angels

Angels are creatures created by Allah for specific functions. They are normally invisible and they have no free will; they do as Allah commands them. They are not to be worshipped. The Angel Gabriel was responsible for conveying the revelation to the prophets. Two angels are assigned to every human being to record their good and evil deeds. Another angel accompanies each human being, encouraging him/her to do good deeds. Others blow the human spirit into the foetus when it reaches the end of the fourth month and others take the human spirit at the time of its death by Allah's permission. There are other angels that have various responsibilities too many to enumerate in this small book.²⁰

There are two main points of difference between the Islamic and the Christian view of angels. Although they are noble and are free of sin, the believing Muslim holds a status above the angels before Allah. The angels were commanded to bow down to Adam due to his superior

20. For more detail, see: *Explanation of the Three Fundamental Principles of Islam* by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen, Al-Hidaayah Publishing and Distribution, UK, 1997

knowledge, and they all did as they were commanded. Christians, on the other hand, believe that angels are of two kinds: good/obedient and evil/disobedient. That is how they justify their belief that Satan is a ‘fallen angel’—an evil angel who disobeyed God, when he did not bow down to Adam with the other angels. According to Islam, angels worship Allah, and cannot disobey Him; angels have no choice whether to worship Allah or not. They are sinless beings because they obey Allah and commit no sins. This is part of the Islamic belief as well. However, both angels and humans are creatures of Allah who are obliged to worship Him. So the second main point of difference between the Christian view and the Islamic view of angels is that of free will: whereas angels have no free will, the human being might obey Allah, might be sinful, might follow some commandments and might commit some sins.

3. Belief in the Scriptures

This article of faith refers to belief in all the scriptures revealed in their original form by Allah to His messengers. These scriptures form the enlightenment which the messengers received to show their people the right path of Allah. All the revealed books call to the worship of Allah alone and forbid worshipping other than Him or others besides Him. They contain guidance for humankind in all

aspects of life. They define right and wrong, and offer human beings a complete system of beliefs and practices governing all of their affairs. The Creator alone knows best what is beneficial for His creation and what is not. Thus, the divine laws contained in those scriptures command and prohibit various acts and substances to protect the human spirit, the human body, and human society from harm. In order for human beings to fulfil their potential by living a righteous life, they definitely need to abide by His commandments documented in His revealed books.

The revealed books do not differ from each other in their main doctrinal principles. However, due to the differences between nations in time and space, there were some differences in the practical teachings (Law) of the scriptures, according to the wisdom of Allah. Their basic message, however, remains the same.

Muslims believe in the previous books as mentioned in the Qur'an: the Scripture of Abraham, the Torah of Moses, the Psalms of David and the Gospel of Jesus. The following verse from the noble Qur'an emphasizes the fact that belief in all previous scriptures sent by Allah is an integral part of the Islamic belief system:

[Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us and to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord, we make no difference between one and another of them, and we bow to Allah (in Islam).] (Qur'an 2: 136).

However, long before the advent of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), they had all been either lost or irretrievably corrupted by later generations over the centuries with myths, superstitions, idolatry and irrational philosophical beliefs, carrying contradicting thoughts. Hence, the existing forms of those scriptures cannot be described as Allah's revelation.

The Bible for example, is one of the remaining books in the hands of its followers. Since it was revealed to Jesus (peace be upon him) it has undergone so many changes until it has become four well-known Bibles instead of one: the Gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John comprise the Bible (The New Testament), along with other documents.

These were written between 40 and 115 years after Jesus (peace be upon him) had left and are based on documents that have been lost. The

Gospel according to Mark, was the first one written in Rome, at least 40 years after the disappearance of Jesus (peace be upon him). The Gospel according to Mathew was written in the Greek Language about 90 years after Christ. The Gospel according to Luke was written in Greece approximately 80 years after Christ. These three Gospels are called Synoptic because they originate from the same lost document and they have a lot in common. The Gospel according to John, on the other hand, has deep differences with the Synoptic Gospels. It is in this Gospel of John where the Divinity and pre-existence of Jesus (peace be upon him) was mentioned, even though Jesus himself never claimed this. This Gospel was written between 110 and 115 years CE.²¹

Analysis of these Gospels reveals the following:

1. During the lifetime of Jesus, there was no written document containing his sayings, acts or lectures.
2. The first records of the sayings of Jesus, which were made close to the time of his disappearance, have been lost.

21. *Study Guide, Comparative Study – Islam and Christianity*, 1978, compiled by Imam Jamil Abdul Razak, Islamic Center of Seattle, Washington, USA

3. The Gospels were written between 40 and 115 years after Jesus' disappearance, and were based on lost documents. As a consequence, there was a loose manipulation of the content.
4. None of the Gospel writers knew, saw or heard Jesus.
5. The Gospels were written in the Greek language while Jesus spoke Aramaic.
6. For at least one hundred years after the Gospels were written; they did not have any canonical authority, and were changed by the writers of the different sects in order to adapt them to their own needs.
7. The present Gospels, seen as a whole, are full of contradictions.²²

These factors have been brought up here in order to demonstrate that the Gospel of Jesus, his original message that was revealed by Allah; has not reached us in its original form. In this way, it can be affirmed that the four Gospels, included in today's Bible, cannot be considered similar or equivalent to the inspired Gospel of Jesus (peace be upon him).

22. Source for points 1-7: "My Great Love for Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) Led Me to Islam", pp. 14-15.

Biblical Proofs of the Bible's Distortion

1. The Old Testament clearly testifies that it was altered by humans. God (Allah) is quoted in Jeremiah 8:8 as saying, "How can you say, 'We are wise, and the law is with us?'" But behold, *the false pen of the scribes has made it into a lie.*"²³
2. Dr. Bilal Philips explains:

About five years after the end of Jesus' ministry, a young rabbi by the name of Saul of Tarsus, who claimed to have seen Jesus in a vision, began to change Jesus' way. Paul (his Roman name) had considerable respect for Roman philosophy and he spoke proudly of his own Roman citizenship. His conviction was that non-Jews who became Christians should not be burdened with the Torah²⁴ in any respect. The author of Acts 13:39 quotes Paul as saying, "And by him every one that believes is freed from everything which you could not be freed by the Law of Moses." It was primarily through the efforts of Paul that the Church began to take on its non-Jewish character.

23. Revised Standard Version

24. As mentioned earlier, Torah is the book revealed to Prophet Moses, peace be upon him.

Paul wrote most of the New Testament letters (epistles), which the Church accepts as the official doctrine and inspired Scripture. These letters do not preserve the Gospel of Jesus or even represent it, instead, Paul transformed the teachings of Christ into a Hellenic (Graeco-Roman) philosophy.²⁵

3. The clearest evidence of biblical distortion from the original form is the revisions being made on the Bible, to the extent that it can be said that every edition is different from the previous one.

Distorting revelations, the biggest sin

The Qur'an emphasizes in more than one verse that distorting Allah's revelation is a severe sin. Allah says in the Qur'an:

[Woe to those who write the scripture with their own hands and then say: This is from Allah, to purchase with it (worldly gain) at a cheap price. Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earned by doing it.] (Qur'an 2: 79)

25. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, Bilal Philips, p. 81

Revelation of the Qur'an

Following the distortion of the previous scriptures, Allah, the Most Compassionate, did not leave human beings to go astray without an unadulterated reference. Indeed, He revealed the Qur'an and promised to preserve it as the final revelation to humankind for all times. It is the Word of Allah which He revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the Angel Gabriel. It was revealed in parts (fragments) of different lengths over a period of 23 years. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) recited the revelation to his companions who wrote it down during his lifetime on palm leaves, parchment, animal bones (the shoulder-blades of camels made a good writing surface), and flat stones. At the same time, he indicated the precise location where each revealed section belonged in the body of the complete volume of the revelation. In addition, the Qur'an was memorized by hundreds of Prophet Muhammad's Companions. One year after the death of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, instructed the Prophet's Companions to collect the whole Qur'an in one volume. Later, the third Caliph, 'Uthmân, prepared several copies from the original text and sent them to the major centres of Islamic civilization.

One of these seven reproductions still remains, and is kept in Istanbul, Turkey.

From that time onward, more than 1400 years ago, the same Qur'anic text has been in use with the exact wording, order and language (Arabic). Not a single word from its 114 chapters, 6200 verses, and approximately 80,000 words has been changed since it was revealed. Indeed, Allah promised in the Qur'an to preserve it intact forever. He says:

*[Verily, I have sent down the Qur'an, and indeed, I will guard it from corruption.]*²⁶ (Qur'an 15: 9).

Just ponder the fact that the Qur'an, in its entirety, is memorized by millions of people, regardless of age, sex, social class, or ethnicity! It is the only book that has been thus preserved, not only on the shelf but in the hearts of humankind.

The Qur'an supersedes all previous scriptures. Allah says to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about the Qur'an:

26. The teachings of Prophet Muhammad (mercy and peace of Allah be upon him) explain and elaborate the Qur'anic verses. They also explain in minute detail the manner of worship as performed by the Prophet. These teachings were meticulously collected and reported by the Prophet's companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

[And to you We have sent the Book in truth, confirming the scriptures that came before it, and superseding them.] (Qur'an 5: 48)

Therefore, one cannot claim that Allah accepts other religions merely because they were originally based on the true scriptures. Although these scriptures are from Allah, the last and final revelation (the Qur'an) supersedes all the rest.

An essential point to understand about the Qur'an is that it is a miracle in both its revelation and content. At the time of the revelation and since, there have been those who have denied the divine and miraculous nature of the Qur'an saying that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was either taught by others or that he wrote it by himself! In order to counteract this claim, Allah lays down a challenge to the whole of humankind saying:

[If you are in doubt concerning what I have revealed to My slave (Muhammad), then produce one chapter like it and you may call on your helpers beside Allah, if you are truthful.] (Qur'an 2: 23)

These are some of the prophecies which the Qur'an has foretold, as no one from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) until this day has been

able to produce the like of one chapter or even a verse of the Qur'an. As such, Muslims do not need any other scriptures to base their faith on, either in full or in part. The Qur'an remains clear and easily understood by anyone who has a good command of the Arabic language. All of its legal injunctions and instructions are clear when the meanings of its words are translated into any of the world's languages.

All of the Qur'an is a proclamation of Monotheism:

1. Some of the verses inform about Allah, His names, attributes, acts and speech. Those verses indicate the Unity and Oneness of Allah with respect to His most excellent names, essence, and perfect attributes.
2. Other verses point to the necessity of worshipping Allah alone, without any associate or partner, and the renunciation of the worship of anything other than Him. Those verses indicate the focus of worship and the necessity for people to single out their Lord in their intentions, requesting His aid, and in turning to Him in repentance.
3. The Qur'an also contains injunctions and prohibitions, and so doing something that has been enjoined or refraining from doing what has been prohibited is the

fulfilment and perfection of the affirmation of the Oneness of Allah.

4. The Qur'an includes stories and information about people of true and sincere belief and tells of their immediate reward in the life of this world as well as the immense reward reserved for them in the hereafter.
5. The Qur'an also contains stories about those who associate partners with Allah and describes their punishment in this life and the punishment they are promised in the hereafter. These are the just desserts of those who deviate from affirmation of Allah's Oneness.

Prophetic Teachings

The teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are the second source of Islamic knowledge after the Holy Qur'an. They explain and elaborate the Qur'anic verses. They also explain in minute detail the manner of worship as performed by the Prophet. The Prophet's statements provide further clarification and details of how to fulfil what Allah has ordered and what He has forbidden. Those teachings were meticulously collected and reported by the Prophet's Companions (may Allah be pleased with them).

Preservation of Islamic Teachings

Preservation of Islamic teachings from alteration does not stop at the preservation of Qur'anic text, but also forbids introducing into his guidance (by saying or writing) anything that is at variance with its premise, values or teachings. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: <<Whoever introduces into this matter (the Islamic teachings) something that does not belong to it, shall find it rejected.>>²⁷

One of the Prophet's Companions said: The Prophet gave us a highly effective admonition so that many of us were tearful and we felt a shudder in our hearts. Someone said to him: Messenger of Allah! This sounds like the admonition of someone bidding his audience farewell. Please outline for us what you recommend. He said: <<I urge you to always remain conscious of Allah (God-fearing), and to listen to and obey your leaders, even if the leader is an Abyssinian slave. Anyone of you who will live long will witness much strife and conflict. Therefore, hold tight to my way and the way followed by rightly-guided rulers.²⁸ Hold on to it and bite onto it with your

27. Narrated by Bukhari (2697) and Muslim (1718)

28. He meant specifically the four caliphs who came after him.

molars,²⁹ and steer away from any invented thing (in religious affairs and laws), for such inventions are deviations (from the right path).>>³⁰

So, in matters of religion, there is no permission to make any change to Islamic teachings. Whatever is at variance with it is wrong and unacceptable. With this strict protection, Islam, as it was revealed, is kept pure from myths and superstitions, and changes that reflect the whims of people and leaders.

4. Belief in the Messengers of Allah

This article of faith addresses the belief that Allah conveyed His message through selected human beings. These individuals, called prophets and messengers, were selected by Allah to be examples of how the scriptures were to be understood and implemented. Prophets have demonstrated practically for their followers how one should live by the law. The way of the prophets is the only way to Allah, because it has been prescribed by Allah Himself. Hence, without prophets, people would not know Allah, His attributes or how to worship Allah.

The role of the prophets can be summarized as follows:

29. i.e., do not let go of it

30. Narrated by Ibn Hibban, vol. 1, p. 179, Abu Dawood (4607), and at-Tirmidhi (2676)

1. Receive the message from Allah.
2. Deliver it to people.
3. Advise people to fear Allah and keep His commandments.
4. Advise people who deviated, disobeyed Allah, or worshipped other than Him to obey Him and worship Him only.
5. Tell people about the fundamental aspects of faith.
6. Teach their followers detailed religious and moral tenets.
7. Be a model example for their people, and lead them to eternal paradise.

Allah has sent a prophet or prophets to every nation to convey the message that He alone was to be worshipped and anything worshipped along with Him or besides Him is false and unacceptable. The Qur'an mentions the names of twenty-five of the prophets (see diagram opposite) while indicating that many others existed, yet were not mentioned by name. The first of these prophets was Adam and the last was Muhammad (mercy and peace of Allah be upon them all).

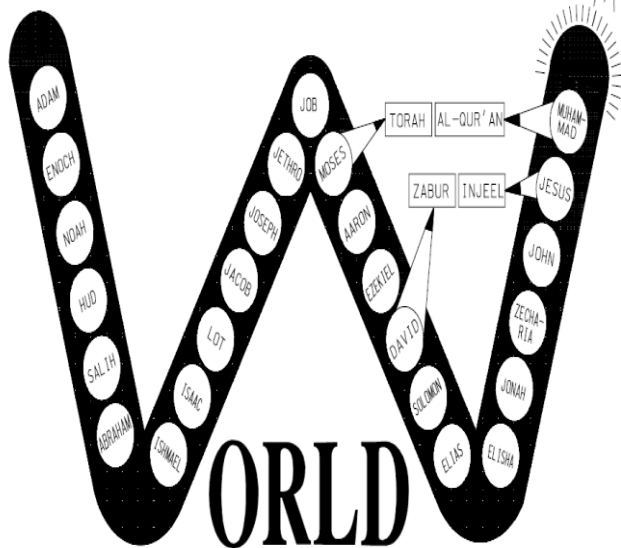
Every prophet was sent to a specific people for a specific era except Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon

him), who was sent as the last and final messenger until the Hour of Judgement. The proofs that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a messenger of Allah are innumerable; all are mentioned in his detailed biography. The greatest proof is the miracle of the Qur'an, which could not have been written by any human, nor conveyed but by a messenger of Allah.

Indeed, mention of the advent of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) can still be found in the books of the Bible in spite of the changes which have taken place in their texts (See chapter XV. 'Muhammad in the Bible')

The Qur'an and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) relate with reverence the lives of many of these prophets. Prophet Muhammad, the last prophet, remained as the absolute example for his followers. His teachings were even further elucidated in practice by his rightly guided successors. The Prophet encouraged his followers continuously to follow the prophetic way and warned against conflict over Islamic principles and values, so that his followers would not deviate from the right path, as had happened to previous peoples.

FOR THE WHOLE



Prophet Muhammad's followers owe him two things: obedience and love.

Obedience to the Prophet

Obedience to the Prophet is mentioned in thirty different verses in the Qur'an. It implies following his commands and avoiding what he prohibited. Obedience to the Prophet indicates the true fulfilment of the second part of the declaration that brings a person into Islam, "I bear witness that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger."

When we examine anything the Prophet encouraged, urged or ordered, we find that all is from Allah, and that all lead to something good, for us personally, to others who are close to us in our families, to our wider community, to the Muslim community in general, or to humanity at large. He only prohibited what is harmful or of no benefit, like adultery, gambling, alcohol, lying, disrespect to parents and so on. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited satanic ways in many statements, because these tend to pull a person away from the right path.

A good believer reaches a state of mind when his desires and pleasures in this life are in line with what Allah wants from him. Every individual should be obedient to Allah and His Prophet, and observe strictly the instructions from Allah. Following Islamic teachings

develops the spirit, but abandoning it leads to a state of decay and spiritual loss.³¹

Loving the Prophet

Islam teaches that loving the Prophet is part of the Islamic faith. The Prophet is quoted as saying: <<None of you is a true believer unless I am dearer to him than his parents, his children, and all other people.>>³²

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: <<There are three qualities which are certain to give anyone the sweetness of faith: to love Allah and His Messenger more than anyone else, to love a person for no purpose other than for Allah's sake, and to hate to relapse into disbelief after Allah has saved him from it as much as one would hate to be thrown into the fire.>>³³

We are required to love Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) more than all others (except Allah) because it was through him that we learned who Allah is, His attributes, our position in relation to Him, what Allah wants from us, and how to worship Him. He guided us through practical example along the way, and following

31. Compiled from *"My Great Love for Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) Led Me to Islam"* by Muhammad Bin Abdullah Caraballo

32. Narrated by Bukhari (15) and Muslim (44)

33. Narrated by Bukhari (16) and Muslim (43)

this is certain to earn for us Allah's acceptance and the ultimate bliss. He has spared us the worst calamity that can ever befall anyone, which is incurring Allah's anger and punishment. He sacrificed everything to deliver Allah's message to us. He sacrificed his health and wealth and his whole life. If we realize all this, how can we not love him more than we love ourselves and all others?

We love Prophet Muhammad because, as described in the Qur'an, he was a 'mercy for all nations'. His compassion extended to all, friends and enemies. Consider this: that, enemies often became his beloved companions and followers. They embraced Islam, saying that his character was proof that he was a true messenger of Allah.

It should be noted that we must love Allah more than the Prophet; the Prophet comes next. Loving Allah, the Prophet and his followers is an act of worship for which one will be rewarded. And vice versa; hating Allah or His Prophet expels one from the bounds of Islam. Correspondingly, hating those who hate Allah or the Prophet is part of Islamic belief, for which the individual will be accounted for and rewarded.

It needs to be clarified here that the emotion of 'hate' that is meant in this context does not lend itself to the commonly known evil type of hate which is the imperfect

human emotion; rather, it is the type of hate that perfects one's faith as it is directed— in the right measure— against those who have taken a defiant stance against the Creator and His chosen messengers. It is a lot like the negative feeling one may hold against the actions of a man who defies and abuses his elderly parents in an evil manner, or an outlaw who fights the justice system and spreads fear and corruption in society. It is clear that hating the actions of such individuals is a natural feeling that good people are expected to have. Although Islam teaches love in all its many forms, it instructs the faithful believers not to love those who do not love Allah and His messengers, until they change their ways, in which case, they commanded to love them! In a nutshell, a Muslim loves for Allah as well as hates for Allah. And here is the great fact about this emotion of hate; a Muslim is instructed not to hate anyone for personal reasons. For example, if a person insulted a Muslim, he is instructed to forgive; surely the difference is great between hating for Allah (well placed emotion) vs. hating for satisfying the self (a destructive) emotion).

The love we should have for the Prophet must be a genuine love, not a mere verbal statement. It should be supported and proven by obedience, following his commands and avoiding what he prohibited. Correspondingly again, the expression of our feelings of

hate or revulsion at the refusal of our fellow human beings to believe in Allah's Oneness and follow the monotheistic teachings of His prophets should be in our positive and pro-active approach to those who disbelieve. We want and pray for them to be guided to the truth, and we need to work for that and work with them for that.

5. Belief in the Last Day

Islam teaches that this life is but a test of conduct for each individual, to see whether or not he or she will follow the commands of Allah. In the hereafter, people will be resurrected and stand before Allah for a just reckoning of their deeds and actions while they were alive on earth. People with good deeds will be generously rewarded and warmly welcomed to the heaven of Allah. However, those with records of many bad deeds will be punished and cast into hell. People have been given knowledge of right and wrong, instinctively and through revelation, and they must choose their path in this short life. Their choices in this life will ultimately determine their places in the eternal life to come. Allah says in the Qur'an: *[Whosoever has done an atom's weight of good will see it, and whosoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see it.]* (Qur'an 99: 7-8)

Belief in the Day of Judgment implants in the human heart the consciousness of Allah, impelling people and

society at large to obey Him sincerely without any external pressure. Effectively, the hereafter for the individual starts right after his soul departs his body. Shortly after his burial, two angels come to the grave and ask the following three questions (like a final exam):

Who is your Lord?

What is your religion?

Who is your prophet?

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said that the believer would not have difficulties in answering them correctly, while the unbeliever would not be able to give the right answers.³⁴ Depending on the result, the person will start to suffer or enjoy his/her stay in the grave after this brief questioning. The grave will expand or contract to give comfort or torture to its dweller depending on what they deserve.³⁵

6. The Belief in Predestination

It includes the belief in the following:

- a) Allah knows everything. His knowledge is not bound by time. Past, present and future are all known to Him.

34 . The believer is the one who believes in the six articles of faith.

35. Narrated by Bukhari (1374) and Ahmad (4/295)

- b) Everything which takes place is already written in a book called the 'Preserved Tablet'.
- c) Allah has created everything, including the actions of people, the good and the bad, but He commanded people to do good deeds and forbade them from doing evil.
- d) One must believe that everything that happens in this universe is happening with Allah's permission, and nothing can take place against His Will.

It should be noted that Allah's prior knowledge of things does not mean that human beings have no choice. Human beings choose, but Allah knows their choices prior to their choosing and action. He merely *allows* them to follow through with their decisions.

X. The Five Pillars of Islam

Worship in Islam is an all inclusive term for all action and statements that Allah loves and approves of. Every virtuous action which is performed with the intention of carrying out the commandments of Allah and seeking His pleasure is considered as an act of worship. Islam is built on five acts of worship which are the foundations from which all deeds emanate. They stand as the framework of spiritual life on which the structure of Islam rests. They are the following:

1. The Declaration of the two Testimonies of faith:

“I testify that there is no deity³⁶ worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.”³⁷ The sincere declaration of this testimony (also referred to as the testimony of Monotheism) and adherence to this teachings automatically brings one within the fold of Islam and dying while believing it guarantees one a place in paradise. This is why this testimony is considered as the cornerstone of Islam. The acceptance of this belief distinguishes the Muslim from

36. “Deity” is defined as ‘an object of worship’.

37. In Arabic: *Ash-hadu an la ilâha illâ Allah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammad Rasool Allah*

the non-Muslim. Hence, all actions depend on this pillar; deeds (no matter how great) are of no avail to a person if he does not make this testimony. However, there are many acts which may contradict this declaration and expel its doer from Islam as quickly as he or she came in. The most serious of those acts is worshipping other than Allah whether in the form of supplication, prayer or other acts that signifies worship or belief in other than Allah.

2. Prayers:

Formal prayers are prescribed five times daily as a duty to Allah at the following times: dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset and nightfall. A Muslim may offer formal prayers almost anywhere as long as the location is clean. Muslim males are enjoined to pray in congregation in a mosque, while females are encouraged to pray in their homes. Prayer provides humans with regular contact with Allah, which helps them, avoid evil. Furthermore, it is symbolic of equality of poor and rich, ruler and subject, black and white. Human beings from every conceivable background stand together, united in rows, shoulder to shoulder, and prostrate themselves before Allah. Prayer strengthens the belief in Allah and elevates the human being to a higher morality. It helps to purify the heart and prevent temptation towards wrongdoing and evil. This act of worship compels the believer to remember his Lord no

matter where he is, night or day. In this way, prayer is continuously taking place throughout the entire world at any given moment.

3. Zakah (Obligatory Charity):

Every Muslim whose net annual savings are above a certain specified minimum must pay an annual amount of 2.5% of his savings to the poor and needy people in the community. Zakah fosters generosity and helps purify the soul of selfishness and greed. Zakah also helps reduce resentment and envy between poor and rich members of the society. Islam is a practical religion. Not only does it safeguard the average individual and his/her rights, it protects the rights of the weaker members of the community as well.

4. Fasting the month of Ramadan:

Fasting in Islam means abstinence from food, drink and sexual acts from dawn to sunset. It is an annual obligation during the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Fasting was imposed on former communities of believers in earlier divine religions. The Qur'an states that the main purpose of fasting is to help us to be more conscious of Allah and more obedient to Him. It teaches sincerity and engenders devotion. It helps us develop a sense of social conscience,

patience, self-restraint, will power and compassion for needy members of the society.

Someone might ask: Why has Allah, in His wisdom, prescribed fasting for many nations?

The answer is that the purpose of fasting is clearly defined as being for the development of Allah-consciousness (piety). Only Allah knows who is actually fasting and who is not. Consequently, one who is fasting refrains from eating and drinking based on an awareness of Allah. Regular fasting enhances that awareness, which subsequently leads to implanting righteousness in the heart of the individual.

As a secondary benefit, fasting is very beneficial to one's health. It purifies the body of toxins; a welcome rest from the useless waste cluttering the body. It allows the body to recuperate and heal. It trains the body, as well as the mind, to function with an amount of food that is sufficient. Also, the needs of basic instincts of survival are kept in check, and when the individual is able to control these, other needs will be easier to control. In return for this sacrifice, Allah grants the believers great rewards and forgiveness of their sins.

5. Hajj (Pilgrimage to Makkah):

The Hajj is obligatory for every Muslim once in a lifetime, if one can afford it financially and bear it physically. During the Hajj, Muslims from all corners of the world meet in an international congregation dedicated to the worship of Allah. It is a great lesson in patience. The huge gatherings for the Hajj are a reminder of the Day of Judgment when all of humankind will gather for their reckoning. It emphasizes the belief that all Muslims are brothers and sisters, irrespective of their geographical, cultural, racial or social origins.³⁸

XI. The Meaning of Worship In Islam

The meaning of worship is, simply, total submission and complete obedience to Allah's Commandments in belief, intentions, statements, and actions. This is achieved by striving to do what Allah has encouraged, avoiding what He has forbidden, and worshipping Him alone according to His teachings. This is the true meaning of the **worship** of Allah in Islam. May Allah enable his followers to achieve this level of worship.

38. It should be noted that the five pillars have high importance in Islam; learning and practicing them are priorities for every Muslim, whereas everything else can be learned gradually, with patience and dedication.

XII. Islam is a Moral System

Islam has unique moral teachings. They call for strengthening the relationship between humans and their Lord, as well as with one another. They also call for people to correct and straighten themselves, both inwardly and outwardly.

Concerning the correcting and strengthening of the relationship between a person and his Lord, the Qur'an calls for people to draw close to Allah through both physical and mental acts of worship such as prayer, the pilgrimage, and sacrifice. In addition, the Qur'an calls us to seek knowledge about Allah through His Names and Attributes. This instils fear and awe of the Lord in people's hearts and establishes discipline in applying Allah's commands and prohibitions.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also instructed people to remember Allah at all times and in every situation. This creates a permanent connection between people and their Lord and instils stability, strength and tranquillity in their hearts. It is one of the means of protecting against evil and vice, since a Muslim will be reminded constantly that Allah is watching his or her every action. The Prophet (peace be upon him), for

example, instructed that specific invocations be said at the time of sleep, before entering the lavatory, before sexual intercourse, while travelling, when in fear, upon entering or leaving one's house, first thing in the morning and in the afternoon, on being afflicted by distress, anxiety or misfortune, when burdened by debt or poverty, upon entering a graveyard, when stopping for a rest or setting up camp, and in many other situations.

Concerning a person's relationship to others, the Qur'an promotes behaviour which strengthens and reinforces social relationships such as the importance given to the role of the family. Treating parents kindly, maintaining good relations with other family members, seeing to the rights and needs of spouses and children and dealing with them with love and mercy, and supporting orphans and the weaker members of society are all obligatory. Conversely, disobeying parents, severing family ties, neglect or abuse of spouses and children, and social isolation are all prohibited.

In addition, the Qur'an instructs that all people should be treated with high moral behaviour and noble manners. One is encouraged to smile, forgive, return harm with good, and have patience when dealing with other Muslims. Since this high code of moral behaviour is quite trying,

Allah has promised immense reward for the one that achieves this.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed people to adopt good manners when in gatherings, such as not raising one's voice, respecting elders, being gentle with youngsters, greeting those present by saying, "*Assalâmu alaykum warahmatuallah wabarakâtuhu*," which means 'may the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you'. Islam also demands that we guard our tongues against saying bad things about others, even if what we wanted to say was true.

Islam also tells us that agreements and contracts must be fulfilled, entrusted items returned, and rulers obeyed. It enjoins noble characteristics just as it forbids vileness, baseness, crime, oppression, hostility, aggression, and all other blameworthy and reprehensible qualities.

Islam highly recommends kindness to parents. This command is mentioned eight times in the Qur'an. In one of the verses, Allah said to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

[And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be dutiful to your parents. If one or both of them become old, do not say to them a word of disrespect nor shout at

them, but address them in terms of honour. And be highly submissive out of mercy, and pray for them saying: My Lord, bestow on them your mercy as they brought me up when I was a child.]
(Qur'an 17: 23-24)

Being kind to parents might seem obvious to most. However, this is the beauty of Islam: it emphasizes this point because in reality, being kind to parents may be more difficult than being kind to strangers!

<<A man asked Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): Whom should I honour most?

The Prophet replied: Your mother.

Then the man asked: And who comes next?

The Prophet replied: Your mother.

Then the man asked again: And who comes next?

The Prophet replied: Your mother.

Then the man asked again: And who comes next?

The Prophet replied: Your father.>>³⁹

Kindness towards relatives has been promoted by most major religions. Islam, however, takes this aspect to a new dimension. Relatives have specific rights laid out by

39. Narrated by Bukhari (5971) and Muslim (2548)

the *Sharia* (Islamic law). We are obliged to assist our relatives by economic as well as social means. The rights of relatives are based on nearness in blood relationship. This can be seen mostly in the rights of inheritors, which are specifically laid out in the Qur'an. The Qur'an goes a step further, even assigning rights to foster relations. A Muslim is not allowed to make a bequest that excludes any of his relatives who have been given a share in the inheritance. Furthermore, even the amount of charity one can assign has been limited; the rights of the relatives must be fulfilled first.

A Muslim must treat all relatives with the utmost respect and kindness, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. A Muslim is not allowed to boycott his or her relatives or cut off relations with them. He or she is encouraged to keep in contact with them even if these relatives were to abandon him or her. Indeed, maintaining family ties is of such great importance that a Muslim is greatly rewarded for doing any good actions that promote this.

Islam encourages treating neighbours very kindly. There is a verse in the Qur'an that sums this all up:

[... [Show] kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto

*the neighbour who is related [to you] and the neighbour who is not related, and the fellow-traveller and the wayfarer...]*⁴⁰ (Qur'an 4: 36)

Also, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: <<(The Angel) Gabriel continued to urge me to treat neighbours kindly and politely, so much that I thought he would order me to make them my heirs.>>⁴¹

The Prophet also said: <<Anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm his neighbour, and anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day should entertain guests generously, and anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day should say what is good or keep quiet.>>⁴²

One of the Prophet's neighbours used to throw trash on him regularly, as he passed by. Once when she did not do this, he inquired about her, concerned that something was wrong. He found her ill in bed, and when she thought he would display anger or vengeance, she was surprised to find him merciful, despite all her rude behaviour towards

40. This translation of the meaning of this verse was taken from *The Glorious Qur'an*, translated (meanings rendered) by Muhammad M. Pickthall, Istanbul: Cagri Yayinlari, 1996 (Editor)

41. Narrated by Bukhari, Hadith no. 6014 and Muslim Hadith no. 2624

42. Narrated by Bukhari, Hadith no. 6018 and Muslim, Hadith no. 47

him. She then embraced Islam because of his kindness. Remember, kindness to neighbours is rewarded by Allah.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) taught many practical good manners, including the virtue of adopting the correct manners for eating and drinking. These include eating with one's right hand and not finding fault with the food but rather being satisfied with it. If you like the food, you should eat it, but if you have no appetite for it, you should leave it in the dish without criticizing it. This is both out of respect for the blessing of the food and in order not to hurt the feelings of the person who cooked it or offered it. It is also preferred for us to eat with others and not alone, either by eating with family or by inviting a poor person to eat with us. The words "In the name of Allah" (in Arabic, *bismillâh*) should be said before beginning to eat, and "All praise belongs to Allah" (*Alhamdulillâh*) after the meal, in order that people remember the blessing they have been given and the One who provided it. The Prophet (peace be upon him) also prohibited people from blowing on food or drink or breathing onto it, out of respect for others who may be sharing it and to avoid the spread of contagious diseases.

Islam also enjoins both physical and spiritual cleanliness. It encourages that we keep our bodies clean, and our clothes and shoes as well. Islam has guided

Muslims for their well-being, even to the minutes detail. For example, a Muslim is encouraged to wash thoroughly after using the toilet, clean his or her teeth often (especially with the *siwâk*, or toothbrush), and shower after sexual relations.

Concerning spiritual purity, the Qur'an instructs that the soul be straightened and corrected and that the heart be purified from spite, malice, jealousy, pride and inequity. It calls for integrity of heart and love, affection and humility towards people. It instructs that the tongue be purified from lying, backbiting, slander, and insult. It should then be replaced with truthfulness and softness in speech. Islam encourages unity, so much so that a Muslim is encouraged to give as many excuses as he could for suspected bad behaviour or speech on the part of his or her fellow Muslim. Also, the wealth, property, and life of a Muslim are held sacred: this means that no one else has the right to interfere with these without the Muslim's express permission. The enormity of sins such as slander and backbiting is emphasized in many verses of the Qur'an, and a chapter of the Qur'an (Qur'an 104) is dedicated to this very subject.

We should restrain our eyes from looking at that to which they are not entitled (such as the private parts of

others), and we should keep our ears from listening to loose and immoral talk, including lewd lyrics.

The Qur'an praises and encourages knowledge and criticizes ignorance, saying that it leads to destruction. It commands people to action and dynamism while prohibiting wasteful talk and laziness.

It also orders that children be born within a legal marriage and that sexual desire be controlled and contained within these parameters.

To uphold the family structure and the well-being of society, the Qur'an prohibits fornication because it is one of the worst assaults on a person's honour and dignity. It is something which causes disease and produces children who are looked upon by society as 'illegitimate'. Likewise, the Qur'an forbids everything which leads to fornication, so it prohibits looking at pornographic pictures and being alone with women who are not close relatives.⁴³ It also commands that men should lower their gaze from looking or staring at women whom they have no right to look at. Muslim women thus enjoy protection and security and can be confident that a Muslim man will not even look at her if not permitted to. The same prohibitions hold for women gazing at men unlawfully.

43. Close relatives are men's mothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, and wives.

With this same reasoning, Islam enjoins morality in behaviour and appearance. Fashions that reduce women to sex objects are not acceptable. Islamic veiling is a means of protection from unwanted external attention. Allah says in the Qur'an:

[O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women that they should cast their outer garments over their bodies so that they should be known and not molested.] (Qur'an 33: 59)

That means, with their husbands women may wear whatever they wish in the privacy of their own homes, where they will receive only the type of attention they desire.

Islam urges men to be kind to their wives, Allah says in the Qur'an:

[He created mates from among yourselves for you to dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts.] (Qur'an 30: 21)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: <<The best of you are those who are kindest to their wives.>>⁴⁴

44. Narrated by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 1978

This is because one can be kind in public where everyone is watching, yet be mean and cruel at home. Islam holds Muslims accountable even in this situation, where their true nature may be revealed. This is the true test of moral behaviour.

In Islam, the wife retains her independent legal status and family name. She is not the property of her husband in any way, but she has many rights due to her from him, as he does from her.

In Islam, it is the husband's obligation to give his wife a valuable gift at the time of marriage. The groom must present the bride with a marriage dowry. The bride retains her dowry even if she is later divorced. He must support his wife and children financially thereafter. The wife is never obliged to act as a co-provider for the family unless she herself voluntarily chooses to do so. It is the husband's sole responsibility to support his family financially. Islam gives women (whether married, divorced or single) the right to inherit, own and trade.

Polygyny (having more than one wife) is permitted in Islam as a solution to social problems. It addresses the problem of orphans and widows in society. It is also a solution which promotes honesty and matrimonial trustworthiness (especially within the family) for those

who have a desire or need for more than one sexual partner, instead of having one wife and taking mistresses. Thus, instead of having an extramarital affair, Islam requires the man to take responsibility for his actions. Islam limits Polygyny to a maximum of four wives at one time. However, it requires the husband to maintain absolute equality in his treatment of his wives, caring for each financially and emotionally in the same exact manner. It should be noted that if a woman is unhappy in this situation, and she fears that she will be unable to fulfil her responsibilities to her husband as well as to Allah, she could opt out of the marriage. A man is not allowed to force her to remain married.

Islam is a religion of moderation. Although divorce is allowed when necessary, family unity is encouraged. For example, in the event of a divorce, the two spouses are encouraged to bring arbitrators from their family members to help reconcile them. Islam discourages divorce, yet recognizes the rights of both partners to end their matrimonial relationship if circumstances dictate it. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: <<A believing man should not hate a believing woman. If he

dislikes one of her traits he will be pleased with another.>>⁴⁵

Therefore Islam is realistic about the option of divorce, yet also encourages solutions to hold the marriage together.

It is clear that women in Islam are honoured for their roles as mothers. Islam acknowledges that a woman sacrifices her life for her children, and thus she is given an honour above that of the father.

The Qur'an also calls for the protection and sanctity of human life and specifically mentions that the taking of an innocent life is one of the worst and most hideous crimes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) forbade breaking the bones of a dead person, so what about the taking of an innocent life? The Qur'an prescribes a 'life for a life' and an 'eye for an eye' for all injuries, however large or small, unless the family of the person killed or the injured person accepts financial compensation instead.

The Qur'an commands that a person's property and wealth be safe and inviolable and therefore prohibits theft, bribery, usury and deception. It calls for moderation in spending and so forbids extravagance, lavishness and the

45. Narrated by Muslim, Hadith no.1467

squandering of money while at the same time forbidding the hoarding and amassing of wealth. It calls for balance and commands that people should neither be greedy, stingy and covetous nor extravagant and wasteful. It encourages people to seek their means of livelihood and for their provision in lawful ways such as buying, selling and renting (activities that bring financial or material benefit to all parties concerned). As mentioned Islam also safeguards the rights and needs of the poor, especially those of them who are relatives or in one's own community, so that they do not have to go elsewhere to seek help.

Islam promotes the protection of good health and has therefore commanded that only wholesome and nutritious food be eaten, and eaten in moderation, and has prohibited the consumption of all harmful food and drink such as pork, carrion, tobacco, alcohol and other intoxicants (mind-altering substances), and so forth. It also prescribes fasting, which has many benefits for the body, especially the digestive system.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed that even animals be treated fairly and with kindness, instructing that they should be fed and watered and promising that such action would be rewarded on the Day of Resurrection. He also instructed that they should not be

made to carry a burden more than they could bear, nor tormented or caused undue suffering or killed unless they were harmful. If an animal is to be slaughtered as food then it should not be slaughtered in front of other animals, to avoid causing undue suffering.

Islam maintains respect for the person even after death. When a Muslim dies, he or she must be buried according to the tradition taught by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The body of the person is washed and perfumed. Then it is wrapped in two pieces of white cloth and the body is buried facing the *Ka'bah*.

We are advised to hold the body deceased's gently to ensure that its bones do not break. Before and after the burial, people are encouraged to pray that Allah forgive the deceased and admit him or her into paradise. Islam prohibits sitting on or walking over the grave, in another sign of respect for the dead.

XIII. Islam and other Religions

One may ask, “If all true religions came with the same message, namely the worship of Allah alone, then why do we find such differences between them?” The answer is that the original forms of these earlier messages were either lost or distorted by later generations. Consequently, the pure messages of Monotheism became polluted with myths, superstitions, idolatry and irrational philosophical beliefs; hence, those religions no longer represent the embodiment of Allah’s revelations. However, Allah, the Compassionate, did not leave human beings without guidance. He ultimately sent Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to revive the original message and to call human beings back to the correct path: belief in the unique Oneness of Allah and worship of Him according to His teachings mentioned in the Qur’an. Consequently, Islam is the seal and completion of all religions, the Qur’an is the seal and completion of all revealed books, and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the seal of all prophets—the final prophet.

XIV. Eleven Facts about Jesus In Islamic Teachings

The Qur'an does not present a detailed biography of Jesus (peace be upon him). However, it does highlight the important aspects of his birth, his miracles, his mission and his ascension. The Qur'anic account of Jesus' ministry confirms most of his miracles mentioned in the Bible and identifies some not mentioned in the Bible. What we know about the prophet Jesus Christ can be divided into two topics: his personality and his message. Eleven facts are detailed below.

What you should know about Jesus

1. The status of Jesus in Islam

Islam teaches that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) is one of the most respected prophets because of his efforts in spreading the Word of Allah. It displays a true spirit of love towards him and his mother Mary. There is not a single disparaging remark against the Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) or any other prophet in the entire Qur'an, nor in other Islamic literature or Islamic history books. As an evidence of praise for Jesus (peace be upon him) is that the story of Jesus (peace be upon him) and his mother is

mentioned in three places in the Qur'an: Chapters 3, 4 and 19. In fact, Chapter 19, an entire chapter of the Qur'an, is called 'Maryam' (Mary) in her honour.⁴⁶

Another evidence of praise is that the name of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) is mentioned 25 times in the Qur'an; this is in contrast to the mention of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), whose name is mentioned only 5 times. This proves that Islam honours all prophets for the message they have in common; it did not discard one prophet with the advent of another.

Jesus (peace be upon him) is referred to in the Qur'an with many titles, *Ibn Maryam* (the Son of Mary), the Messiah (the anointed one), '*Abdullâh* (slave of Allah), and *Rasool Allâh* (the messenger of Allah).

This praise and glorification agree with what Jesus (peace be upon him) is reported to have said in John 14:16⁴⁷ describing the prophet that would succeed him: "He will glorify me."

46. The reader may observe that out of 66 books of the Protestant and 73 of the Roman Catholics, this honour is not found given to Mary in the Christian Bible. Also, not one of them is named after Mary or her son. (*Christ in Islam*, by Dr. Ahmad Deedat, p. 11) We may also note that no chapter in the Qur'an is named after any of Prophet Muhammad's wives or daughters.

47. New International Version (NIV) & the King James Version (KJV)

2. The Beginning of his Lineage

The Qur'anic account of Jesus (peace be upon him) starts with the story of his mother, Mary. When she conceived her, the mother of Mary vowed to dedicate her child (Mary) to the worship of Allah and His service in Jerusalem.

When Mary grew up, she was very righteous. She dedicated herself to the worship of Allah and was supplied with provision from Allah. Therefore, it is no mystery as to why she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus. The Qur'anic verses read:

[[Remember] when the wife of 'Imrân [the mother of Mary] said: My Lord, I have vowed to you what is in my womb, devoted to your worship and service in Jerusalem. So accept this from me. Verily, you are the Hearer and Knower of all things.

Then, when she gave birth to her (Mary) she said: My Lord, I have given birth to a female child – and Allah was well aware of what she had delivered – and the male is not like the female; I have named her Maryam (Mary), and I seek Your protection for her and her offspring from Satan, the outcast. So her Lord accepted her most

graciously and soundly nurtured her under the care of Zachariah (Zakariyya), whenever Zachariah visited her in her place of worship he would find her supplied with sustenance.⁴⁸ He said: O Mary, from where have you got this? She said: From Allah; truly Allah gives without counting to whom He so wills.] (Qur'an 3: 35-37)

It is interesting to see that when the Mother of Mary conceived, she was a bit disappointed that she did not have a son. This was because she had always wished that her child be dedicated to the worship of Allah. However, little did she know that this very child would be extremely righteous, and end up being the mother of Jesus. This was better for her than a son. Hence, Allah's words: *[...and Allah was well aware of what she had delivered...]*

3. The Status of Mary

Mary is very highly respected in Islam. Allah says: *[And when the Angels said: O Mary, Allah has chosen you and purified you and chosen you above all women. O Mary, worship your Lord devoutly and prostrate yourself and bow down [in prayer] with those who bow down. This is a part*

48. It is mentioned in the exegesis of the Qur'an that these provisions were out-of-season fruit.

of the tidings of the unseen which We reveal unto you by inspiration.] (Qur'an 3: 42-44)

4. The News about Jesus

(Peace be upon him)

When Mary approached adulthood, she was informed about the honour of bearing this noble son well before his birth. It was the angel Gabriel (peace be upon him) who appeared to her with this news. The following verses in the Qur'an describe the dialogue between Mary and the angels:

[And when the angels said: O Mary, verily Allah gives you glad tidings of a word from Him whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and in the hereafter, and one of those brought near to Allah. He will speak to the people while in the cradle, and in maturity, and he is one of the righteous. She said: My Lord, how could I have a son when no man has touched me? He said: So it shall be; Allah creates whatsoever He wills. If He decrees something, He says to it: Be! and it is.] (Qur'an 3: 45-47)

5. The Birth of Jesus

(Peace be upon him)

Mary conceived this child miraculously (the first miracle) and retired to a distant place where she waited for the birth of her child. This amazing story is related to us in chapter 19 of the Qur'an, 'Maryam' (Mary):

[So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a far place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm tree. She said: Would that I had died before this, forgotten and out of sight. Then he (Jesus) called to her from below her, saying: Do not grieve; your Lord has placed a rivulet beneath you. And shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you, causing ripe dates to fall down to you. So eat and drink and rejoice, and if you see any human being, say: Verily, I have vowed a fast unto the All-Merciful, so I shall not speak to any human being this day.] (Qur'an 19: 22-26)

6. Subsequent Miracles of Jesus

(Peace be upon him)

Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was blessed with the ability to perform many miracles. This supported his claim that he was a prophet from Allah. Allah Almighty says in the Qur'an:

[We gave Jesus the son of Mary the clear signs, and supported him with the holy Spirit.] (Qur'an 2: 87)

Muslims do not hesitate to accept the fact that Jesus (peace be upon him) performed miracles. At the same time, Muslims do not elevate Jesus (peace be upon him) to the position of Allah or describe him as the 'son of God', or consider him to be anything more than a divinely-inspired man: a messenger and prophet of Allah.

The same applies to all the prophets, since many of them were blessed with different miracles as well.

The First Miracle

The first miracle associated with Jesus (peace be upon him) was that he was born from a mother without any human intervention (father). Allah gave the divine command 'Be' and he was created.

The Qur'an mentions the miraculous creation of both Adam and Jesus (peace be upon him) in the following verse:

[Truly, the likeness of Jesus in Allah's sight is the likeness of Adam, He created him from dust. Then, He said to him: Be! and he was.] (Qur'an 3: 59)

The Qur'an mentions that Jesus' miraculous birth did not change the state of his humanness; that is, he did not evolve from a human being to become Allah or to be a son of Allah, because, rationally, if that is the case, then Adam would have a greater right to such an honour, since he was born without a human father or mother.

Another Miracle was that Allah gave Jesus (one of only three people that Allah chose for this) the ability to talk while still an infant, a blessing which helped save his mother from the harsh slander of her own community. This remarkable story is narrated in the Qur'an:

[Then she brought him to her people, carrying him. They said: O Mary, indeed you have committed something truly outrageous. O sister of Aaron, your father was not a man who committed fornication and adultery, nor was your mother an unchaste woman. So she pointed to him. They

said: How can we talk to someone who is a child in the cradle? He said: Verily, I am the slave of Allah. He has given me the scripture, and made me a prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and enjoined on me prayers and charity as long as I remain alive, dutiful to my mother, and He has not made me proud, perverse or unblessed. And may peace be on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive.] (Qur'an 19: 27-33)

Subsequent Miracles

Other miracles performed by Jesus (peace be upon him) are also mentioned in the Qur'an:

[Allah will say [on the Day of Resurrection]: O Jesus, son of Mary, remember my favour to you and to your mother, when I supported you with the holy Spirit, so that you spoke to the people while you were in the cradle and in maturity,⁴⁹ and remember when I taught you the scripture and wisdom,⁵⁰ the Torah and the Gospel,⁵¹ and

49. This means that Jesus (peace and blessings be upon him) called people to worship Allah both when he was a baby in the cradle, and also when he reached adulthood.

50. 'Wisdom' here means the correct and profound understanding of religion.

remember when you fashioned birds out of clay by My permission, and after you breathed into it, it became a bird by My permission, and remember when you healed those born blind and the lepers by My permission; and remember when you brought raised the dead [to life] by My permission. And remember when I restrained the children of Israel from you [when they decided to kill him but Allah raised him up] when you came to them with clear proofs, but the disbelievers said: This is nothing but evident magic.] (Qur'an 5: 110)

Indeed, the Islamic account of the miracles bestowed on Jesus describes more miracles than those known to Christians. Also, facts 10 and 11 below are two more miracles associated with Jesus and his role as the Messiah.

Important Note

As shown in previous verse, it was emphasized after mentioning each miracle that whenever Jesus performed a miracle, he informed the people that it was by Allah's permission. He made it clear to his followers that he was not doing the miracle by himself.

51. It is the original form of revelation given to Jesus (peace and blessing be upon him). According to Qur'anic exegesis, Jesus memorized both these scriptures.

As Dr. Philips points out:

There are texts in the New Testament which confirm that Jesus did not act on his own. Jesus is quoted in John 5:30 saying: "I can of mine own self do nothing." ...In acts 2:22, Paul writes: "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs **which God did through him** in your midst, as you yourselves know..."⁵²

7. Humanness of Jesus

(Peace be upon him)

Islam forbids the deification of human beings (going to excess in the exaltation of humans—prophets or otherwise—to the point where they seem divine). Addressing both the Jews and the Christians, Allah says in the Qur'an:

[O people of the scripture,⁵³ do not commit excesses in your religion nor say other than the truth about Allah. Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, was certainly no more than a messenger of Allah, His Word which He bestowed on Mary, and a

52. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p.45.

53. Allah begins this sacred verse with a word of respect, with which the Jews and the Christians are addressed as learned people, people who have received revelation in the form of scripture.

spirit from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and do not say, "Three". It is better for you to desist. Verily Allah is (the only) one God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. And Allah is sufficient as Guardian. The Messiah will never disdain to be a slave of Allah,⁵⁴ nor the angels who are close to Him. Whosoever disdains worshipping Him and is proud and haughty, He will certainly gather them all unto Himself. So, as for those who believed and did deeds of righteousness, He will give them their rewards; and more out of His bounty. But as for those that refused to worship Him and were proud, He will punish them with a painful punishment, and they will not find for themselves besides Allah any protector or helper. O humankind, manifest proof has come to you from your Lord; We have sent down to you a clear light [the Qur'an]. As for those who believed in Allah, and held fast to Him, He will surely admit them to mercy from Him, and bounty, and will guide them to Him on a straight path.] (Qur'an 4: 171-175)

54. The meaning of slavery in Islam will be explained in chapter XI, 'The meaning of worship'

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) warned against the deification of humans. He said: <<O people, beware of going to excesses in religion, for verily people before you were destroyed for going to excesses in religion.>>⁵⁵

Being a human prophet, Jesus (peace be upon him) did not call people to worship him. Allah informs us in the Qur'an that on the Day of Judgment he will gather all the nations in front of Himself and He will ask the Messengers how they were received by their peoples and what they said to them. Among those who are going to be questioned is Jesus (peace be upon him):

[And when Allah says (on the Day of Judgment): O Jesus, son of Mary, did you say to people: Take me and my mother as gods besides Allah? He will say: Glory be to you! It is not for me to say what I have no right to. Had I indeed said it, you would surely have known it. You know what is in myself and I do not know what is in Yourself. Truly, You alone are the Knower of the hidden and unseen. Never did I say to them anything except what You commanded me to say: Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them

55. Narrated by Ibn Mâjah (3029) and an-Nasâ'i (3057)

while I remained among them, but when You took me up to Yourself, You, Yourself, were the Watcher over them and You are the Witness over all things. If you punish them, they are your slaves, and if you forgive them, verily only You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. Then Allah will say: This Day whereon the truthful benefit from their truthfulness. They will have gardens under which rivers flow, abiding therein forever. Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. That is the ultimate triumph.]
(Qur'an 5: 116-119)

8. Jesus' Prophethood

The Islamic view of Jesus (peace be upon him) is a moderate one, as it lies between two extremes. The Jews rejected Jesus (peace be upon him) in his role as a prophet of Allah and called him an impostor. The Christians on the other hand, considered him to be the son of God (Allah), and 'God-incarnate' in some cases, and began worshipping him. Islam considers Jesus (peace be upon him) as one of the greatest prophets of Allah.

Allah says:

[Christ, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger, who was preceded by many

messengers, his mother was a woman attributed with full truth.⁵⁶ They both ate food. See how Allah makes His signs clear to them, yet see in what ways they are deluded away from the truth.]
(Qur'an 5: 75)

9. The Mission of Jesus

(Peace be upon him)

Now one might ask: what was the real mission of Jesus according to the Qur'an?

Jesus (peace be upon him) propagated the message of Monotheism, the Worship of Allah alone in the way prescribed in the Gospels. He worked hard to propagate this message, and talked to everyone about it. Allah says:

[And he speaks to the people while in the cradle and in maturity, and he is one of the righteous.]
(Qur'an 3: 46)

The prophecy of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a successor to Christ was a part of Jesus' message. Allah says in the Qur'an:

[And when Jesus, the son of Mary, said: O Children of Israel, I am the messenger of Allah

56. She never claimed that she was a mother of God, nor that her son was God. She was a pious, virtuous woman.

sent unto you, confirming the Torah before me, and giving glad tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.⁵⁷ But when he (Muhammad) has come to them with clear proofs, they said: This is mere magic.]
(Qur'an 61: 6)

Though the Bible has been altered a great deal, it contains remnants of the original true message revealed to Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). In this regard, the messenger of whom Jesus (peace be upon him) gave glad tidings and prophecies is still referred to in both the old and new testaments of the Bible. (See chapter XV of this book, 'Muhammad in the Bible')

Jesus (peace be upon him) was a link in a long line of prophets and messengers sent by Allah to various civilizations and nations whenever they needed guidance or deviated from the teachings of Allah. Jesus (peace be upon him) was sent by Allah especially to preach to the Jews, who had deviated from the teachings of Moses (peace be upon him) and other messengers. Just as he was supported by Allah miraculously in his conception, birth and childhood, he was also supported by numerous

57. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him) had several names, 'Ahmad' being one of them, but 'Muhammad' is the most well-known.

miracles to prove that he was a messenger from Allah. However, the majority of the Jews rejected his ministry.

It must be realized that Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, was the last in the line of prophets sent to the Jewish people. (See chapter XV)

10. Jesus' Ascension

Jesus' ascension is the last Miracle which was given to Jesus (peace be upon him) when he was on earth. The Jews attempted to kill him. Allah replaced him with another person who looked like him. Jesus (peace be upon him) was not killed or crucified but raised to Allah. In fact, it was this other person that was killed. To this day, it is thought by Christians that Jesus himself was the one who was killed.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

[And they said: We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, Messenger of Allah, but they did not kill him or crucify him, but that is how it appeared to them. Verily, those who disagree with this matter are in doubt and have no knowledge of it; they follow speculation. They certainly did not kill him. Certainly, Allah raised him up; Allah is All-Mighty and All-Wise.] (Qur'an 4: 157-158)

11. The Second Coming of Jesus

(Peace be upon him)

In Islamic teachings there is clear evidence indicating the second coming of Jesus (peace be upon him) before the Final Hour and this is an additional and final miracle for Jesus (peace be upon him). He will come back not as God, as the Christians believe, but as Jesus, Allah's messenger and slave, as he always been. The purpose of his coming will be to correct the misconceptions surrounding his message and mission. According to a statement of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), he will stay for forty years, and these will be the happiest years of life on this earth. At that time, those who had misconceptions about him will correct their understanding and believe in him as a messenger, not as the son of God (Allah). It is narrated by Abu Hurayrah⁵⁸, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: <<By the one in whose hand is my soul, it will not be long before the son of Mary descends amongst

58. Abu Hurayrah was one of the closest Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It should be noted that the words, actions, and tacit approvals of Prophet Muhammad have been narrated by the Companions and have subsequently been recorded. A Companion, according to the majority of scholars, is one who has met personally with Prophet Muhammad during his lifetime and was a Muslim at the time of meeting him. Thus one will find much of the history of the Prophet (peace be upon him) through such narrations, called the Hadith.

you, a just judge and ruler. He will break the cross, kill the swine and abolish the tribute paid by Jews and Christians. Money will be so plentiful that no one will accept it. At that time a single prostration will be better than this world and everything in it.>>⁵⁹

Abu Hurayrah then said, “Read if you wish (the following verse of the Qur’an),

[And verily there is no one from among the people of the scripture⁶⁰ except that he will believe in him before his death, and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness over them.]
(Qur’an 4: 159)”⁶¹

In another narration Abu Hurayrah said, “Among the things which Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was recorded to have said regarding Prophet Jesus' return is the following: <<There will be no prophet between me and Jesus, and he will return. When he does, you will know him. He will be a well-built man of ruddy complexion and he will descend wearing a two-piece garment. His hair will look wet, though no water touched it. He will fight people to establish Islam and he will break

59. This is because with the advent of Jesus (peace be upon him), people will know with certainty that the final hour is very near.

60. Jews and Christians

61. Narrated by Bukhari (3448)

the cross, kill the swine and cancel the *jizyah*.⁶² During his time, Allah will destroy all religions except Islam and the Antichrist⁶³ will be killed. Jesus will remain on earth for forty years, and when he dies, Muslims will pray the funeral prayer for him.>>⁶⁴

Jesus' return will be one of the signs of the coming of Day of Judgment. It is the last miracle to be given to him before he dies.

62. It is the tax taken from Christians and Jews in lieu of living under Muslim protection.

63. The Antichrist is also called the 'false Christ'; he is a man who will claim that he is Allah (may He be Glorified), and he will be followed by ignorant people, but Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) will find him and kill him.

64. Narrated by Abu Dâwood (4324)

XV. Muhammad in the Bible⁶⁵

26 proofs from the Bible on Muhammad's Prophethood

The Biblical prophecies on the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are evidence of the truth of Islam for people who believe in the Bible. Before addressing these prophecies, the following points should be brought to the reader's attention:

Islamic teachings gave a criterion for accepting or not accepting portions or passages from the Bible. This criterion is provided in the following verse of the Qur'an:

[And unto you We have revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a trustworthy witness over it...]
(Qur'an 5: 48)

This verse emphasizes two main aspects of the Qur'an:

- a) The Qur'an confirms those teachings or passages of previous scriptures which remained intact.

65. This chapter was compiled from *Muhammad in the Bible* by Dr. Jamal Badawi and *What the Bible says about Muhammad* by Dr. Ahmed Deedat.

- b) The Qur'an is the last, complete, authoritative and authentic revelation from Allah. It is the final arbiter and the only criterion to correct any inaccuracy or misinterpretation which might have occurred in the transmission of scriptures through the ages. With this, it helps to discover, expose, and disclose human additions or interpolations of previous revelations prior to its revelation (the Qur'an). Indeed one of the names of the Qur'an is *al-Furqân* (the criterion which distinguishes between right and wrong, truth and falsehood).

It follows, therefore, that a Muslim has no reason to reject the essence of any passage in the Bible if such a passage is confirmed by the Qur'an. For example, we read in the New Testament a reiteration of one of the Ten Commandments:

“And Jesus answered him. The first of all commandments is hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord” (Mark 12:29)

A Muslim who reads this passage in the Qur'an can find no objection to its essence. After all the Qur'an confirms:

[Say: *He is Allah, the One and Only (God)*]
(Qur'an 112: 1)

If, however, a Muslim reads in the Bible (or other previous scriptures for that matter) accusations of major moral sins levied against great prophets or doctrines which are totally negated in the Qur'an, the Muslim accepts only the Qur'anic version as the original unadulterated truth, revealed by Allah.

Likewise, if the Bible (or other scriptures) contains apparent prophecies about the advent of Prophet Muhammad, and if the Qur'an confirms that fact, then there is nothing unusual or objectionable in referring to such prophecies.

Describing true believers, the Qur'an states:*[Those who follow the unlettered⁶⁶ prophet, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel which are with them. He will enjoin on them that which is right and forbid them that which is wrong, and he will make lawful for*

66. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was illiterate (could neither read nor write). No human had ever taught him a word. The wisdom behind his unlettered status is to repel false accusations that the Qur'an was written or authored by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). It shall be noted that there were no Arabic-language Bibles in existence in the 6th Century of the Christian Era, when Muhammad lived and preached. Indeed, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was educated through (the Qur'an) revealed to him by His Creator, containing things that no other human being could have known. Additionally, the Messenger of Allah was the best of humanity in every aspect of his character, including his intellectual skills.

them all good things and prohibit for them only what is foul; and he will relieve them of their burden and the fetters. Those who believe in him, honour and help him and follow the light which is sent down with him are the successful.] (Qur'an 7: 157)

The original Bible given to Prophets Moses and Jesus (peace and blessings be upon them) contained a complete and clear profile of the advent of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Even in its present form(s), the Bible still contains several such prophecies, as will be shown in the forthcoming chapters. Quoting Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), the Qur'an states:

[And when Jesus, son of Mary said: O Children of Israel, I am the messenger of Allah to you, confirming that which was (revealed) before me in the Torah, and bringing good tidings of a messenger who will come after me, whose name is Ahmad (the praised one). But when he (Muhammad) comes to them with clear proofs, they say: This is mere magic.] (Qur'an 61: 6)

Main Attributes of Muhammad's Profile in the Bible

The main elements in Muhammad's profile as depicted in the Bible are seven:

1. His name
2. His characteristics
3. The location from which he was to emerge
4. The message to be revealed through him
5. Fulfilment of prophecies which he foretold
6. The time when he was to appear
7. The unique proof

1. His Name

1. Prophet Muhammad is mentioned by name in ten locations in the Christian Gospel

Prophet Muhammad is mentioned by name in ten locations in the Christian Gospel of Barnabas, in chapters 39, 41, 44, 54, 55, 97, 112, 136, 165, and 220.

Consider the following explicit quote from chapter 165:

The disciples answered, "O Master, who shall that man be of whom you speak, who shall come into the world?" Jesus answered with joy of heart: "He is Muhammad; Messenger of God, and when he comes into the world, even as the rain makes the earth to bear fruit when for a long time it has not rained, even so shall he be occasion of good works among men, through the abundant mercy

which he shall bring. For he is a white cloud full of the mercy of God, which mercy God shall sprinkle upon the faithful like rain.”

It is a fact that the Trinitarian church has done its utmost to obliterate all existing copies of the Gospel of Barnabas, and to hide it from the masses or to label it a forgery.

2. His Characteristics

In Deuteronomy 18, Moses stated that God told him:

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers;⁶⁷ I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account. (Deuteronomy 18:18-19)

From these verses we conclude that the prophet in this prophecy must have the following three characteristics:

First, that he will be like Moses (peace be upon him).

67. When these words were spoken, they were addressed to the Israelites. The most notable “brethren” of Israelites (descendants of Abraham through his second son Isaac), are the Ishmaelites (descendants of Abraham through his first son Ishmael).

Second, that he will come from the brothers of the Israelites, the Ishmaelites.

Third, that God will put His words into the mouth of this prophet, and that he will declare what God commands him.

Let us examine these three characteristics in depth:

2. A prophet like Moses (peace be upon him)

There were hardly any two prophets who were so much alike as Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them). Both were given a comprehensive law and code of life. Both encountered their enemies and were victorious in miraculous ways. Both were accepted as prophets and statesmen. Both migrated following conspiracies to assassinate them. Analogies between Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them) overlook not only the above similarities but other crucial ones as well. These include the natural birth, the family life, and death of Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them) both died the natural death.

Some people think that this prophecy refers to Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) but simply cannot be true. The following ten points of comparison between Prophets Moses, Muhammad and Jesus (peace and blessing be upon

them) demonstrate that Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) does not fit this particular prophecy. It would clarify the identity of “that Prophet” who has come after Moses (peace be upon him). This comparison is self-evident. Following are the details:

Birth

The birth of Jesus (peace be upon him) was miraculous. According to Christian and Muslim beliefs, he was miraculously born of the Virgin Mary.⁶⁸ However, both Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them) were born in the usual manner; the physical association of man and woman. Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

68. In the Gospel of St. Matthew 1:18 “...before they came together, (Joseph the Carpenter and Mary) she was found with child by the Holy Ghost.” And St. Luke tells us that when the good news of the birth of a holy son was announced to her, Mary reasoned: “...how this shall be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee...” (Luke 1:35). The Holy Qur’an confirms the miraculous birth of Jesus in noble and sublime terms. See chapter XIV, ‘11 facts about Jesus’ (peace be upon him).

It shall be noted that it is not necessary for Allah to plant a seed in man or animal. He merely wills it and it comes into being. This is the correct view of the conception and the birth of Jesus.

Parents

Moses had a father and a mother. Muhammad also had a father and a mother. But Jesus had only a mother and no human father. Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessing be upon them).

Marital status

Both Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon them) were married and had children. There is no record of marriage and offspring in the case of Jesus (peace be upon him). Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessing be upon them).

Death

Both Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them) died due to natural causes and were buried. The end of the mission of Jesus on earth was unusual; being raised up to the heavens according to Islamic belief, crucifixion according to Christian belief.⁶⁹ According to Christians, Jesus died for the sins of the world, but Moses did not have to die for the sins of the world. He and Muhammad died due to natural causes. Therefore, Jesus is

69. This subject was discussed in an earlier section.

not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

Prophethood

Jesus (peace be upon him) was regarded by later Christians as the Son of God and not as a prophet of God (Allah), as Moses and Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon them) were. Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

Acceptance/rejection of prophethood by people (moral success)

Unlike Jesus, Moses and Muhammad were accepted as prophets by their people in their very lifetime. No doubt the Jews gave endless trouble to Moses and they wandered in the wilderness. He left Egypt following knowledge of a plot to kill him and went to Medyan, where he was welcomed and reassured by Jethro. But ultimately, the Jews, as a nation, acknowledged that Moses was a Messenger of Allah sent to them. The Arabs too, made Muhammad's life terribly difficult for the first ten years of his mission. He suffered very badly at their hands and left his home town Makkah, following knowledge of a plot to kill him. He went to Yathrib, which was later called Madinah, after 13 years of preaching in Makkah. But

before his demise, the Arab nation as a whole accepted him as the Messenger of Allah.

On the other hand, Jesus (peace be upon him) was not accepted by the people to whom he was sent. According to the Bible: “He (Jesus) came unto his own, but his own people received him not.” (John 1:11). And even today, after two thousand years, his own people—the Jews, as a whole, still reject him. So, from this aspect, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

Confrontation of the enemy

Moses (peace be upon him) encountered his enemies (the Pharaoh’s army) who sought to destroy him and his followers before they could escape to the Red Sea. Muhammad (peace be upon him) also encountered his enemies (the pagan Arabs), who sought to destroy him and his followers in several battles. No such encounter was reported in the case of Jesus (peace be upon him). On the contrary, Jesus was reported to have commanded his disciple Simon Peter to put his sword back into its sheath when he attempted to defend Jesus (peace be upon him) at the time of his arrest. From this aspect as well, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

Victory

Moses' encounter with his enemies ended with a military and moral victory. His enemies drowned, and Moses (peace be upon him) and his followers were saved.

Muhammad's encounters with his enemies also ended with his final military and moral victory over them. He and his followers re-entered Makkah, the city and centre of plotting against him. Impressed with his truthfulness and magnanimity, the great majority of his former enemies chose to become Muslims and were among his ardent supporters. Jesus' victory against his enemies was only a moral victory, which did not involve an immediate military victory over them at the same time. Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

Acceptance

During his lifetime, after initial resistance and scepticism from his people, Moses (peace be upon him) was accepted by his people as a Prophet, notwithstanding certain lapses (such as the worship of the golden calf).⁷⁰ Also, after initial resistance, Muhammad was

70. An Israelite was found picking up firewood on Sabbath Day, and Moses had him stoned to death. (Numbers 15:36) There are other crimes also mentioned in the Bible for which capital punishment was inflicted on the Jews at the behest of Moses.

enthusiastically accepted as a Prophet and a leader, also in his lifetime. Until the end however, and with the exception of a few followers, Jesus was rejected by his people (the Israelites). The Christian Gospel clearly confirms this: when Jesus was dragged before the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, and charged with sedition, Jesus made a convincing point in his defence to refute the false charge. He said, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my kingdom not from hence." (*John 18:36*)

This convinced Pilate (a pagan) that though Jesus might not be in full possession of his mental faculty, he did not strike him as being a danger to his rule. Jesus claimed a spiritual kingdom only; he only claimed to be a Prophet. Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

Preservation of teachings

The teachings revealed to Moses were available in a written form in his lifetime. The Qur'an revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him) was written down in its entirety during his lifetime and under his supervision. The teachings of Jesus (peace be upon him), however, were not committed to writing in his lifetime. Even the earliest

Gospel was written down many years after him. Therefore, Jesus is not like Moses, but Muhammad is like Moses (peace and blessings be upon them).

With these ten points of comparison between Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon him), any thinking person will conclude that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the prophet referenced in Deuteronomy 18:18-19. 'like unto me (Moses).

3. That he will come from the brothers of the Israelites, the Ishmaelites

The two Prophets, Muhammad and Moses (peace and blessings be upon them), are both descended from the brothers of the Israelites. To elaborate, Abraham (peace be upon him) had two wives, Sarah and Hagar. Hagar bore Abraham a son, his first son, Ishmael,⁷¹ and then Sarah bore him Isaac (peace be upon them).⁷² Ishmael became the grandfather of the Arab nation, and Isaac became the grandfather of the Jewish nation. The prophet spoken of was not to come from among the Jews themselves, but from among their brothers, the Ishmaelites.⁷³ Muhammad

71. See (Genesis 16:15)

72. See (Genesis 21 :2-3)

73. According to the *Hebrew Dictionary of the Bible*, "brethren" is the "personification of a group of tribes who were regarded as near kinsmen of

(peace be upon him), a descendant of Ishmael, is indeed this prophet.

Also, Isaiah 42:1-13 speaks of the servant⁷⁴ of God, His "chosen one" and "messenger" who will bring down a law. "He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope." (Isaiah 42:4)

Verse 11 connects that 'chosen one' with the descendants of Kedar. Who was Kedar? According to Genesis 25:13, Kedar was the second son of Ishmael, the ancestor of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).⁷⁵

the Israelites." The Bible refers to the Israelites as the brethren of the Ishmaelites (e.g. Gen.16:12 & Gen.25:18).

74. The term in Arabic is 'Abd', which means 'the one devoted in worship' by obeying His commands and shunning what He forbids. As mentioned earlier, the use of the word 'servant' does not imply that Allah is in need of assistance or help.

75. The full text in the chapter of Isaiah reads:

Is. 42:1-8 "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope." This is what God the LORD says — he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make

The same verse prophesies about the ‘chosen one’ whose prophetic mission would be to all nations; this fits only Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) whose mission was to all nations, unlike the Hebrew prophets whose missions were limited to Israel, “...he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not fail or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law... Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice, the villages Kedar inhabits.”

4. God (Allah) will put His words in the mouth of this prophet.

Allah the Almighty sent the angel Gabriel to teach Muhammad (peace be upon him) the exact words that he should repeat to the people. The words are therefore not his own; they did not come from his own thoughts, but were put into his mouth by the angel. To clarify, if a teacher were to teach a student a language, and if he asked him to read or repeat after him what he utters, then would he not be putting these unheard words of a foreign tongue which he utters into his student’s mouth?

you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.”

In an identical manner, the words of the Holy Qur'an were revealed.

History tells us that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was forty years of age. He was in a cave some three miles north of the city of Makkah. It was the 27th night of the Islamic month of Ramadan. In the cave the Archangel Gabriel commands him in his mother tongue: '**IQRA**' which means **READ**, or **PROCLAIM**, or **RECITE**!

Muhammad is terrified, and in his bewilderment he replies that he is unlettered. The angel commands him a second time with the same result. For the third time the angel utters the same command. Now Muhammad grasps that what is required of him is to repeat and to recite, and he repeats the words as they are put into his mouth:

[Recite in the name of the Lord who created; He created man from a (mere) clot of congealed blood. Recite, and your Lord is most generous. He taught with the use of the pen. He taught the human that which he did not know.] (Qur'an 96: 1-5)

As soon as the awesome angel departed, Muhammad rushed back home, shaking in fear and sweating all over. He asked his beloved wife Khadijah to cover him up. He lay down, and she remained by him, calming him down

and comforting him. When he had regained his composure, he explained to her what he had seen and heard. She assured him that Allah would not allow any terrible thing to happen to him. During the next twenty-three years of his prophetic life, words were 'put into his mouth' in the same way, and he uttered them. These words (verses) made an indelible impression on his heart and mind, and as the volumes of the sacred scripture (the Noble Qur'an) grew, they were recorded on palm leaves, on skins and on the shoulder-blades of animals, and in the hearts of his devoted disciples.

The words (revelation) were actually put into his mouth exactly as foretold in the prophecy under discussion: "and I will put my words in his mouth". (Deut. 18:18) In a similar quote from John 16:13, Jesus (peace be upon him) says: "When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his authority, but whatever he hears he will speak." Also, Jesus (peace be upon him) foretold that the "Paraclete" to come after him was one who "shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak."

As a scholar of comparative religion has said:

Neither the content of the revelation, nor its form, were of Muhammad's devising. Both were given by the

angel, and Muhammad's task was only to repeat what he heard.⁷⁶

5. Unlettered Prophet

Muhammad's experience in the cave of Hirâ (later to be known as *Jabal an-Noor*—the Mountain of Light), and his response to that first revelation is the exact fulfilment of another Biblical prophecy. In the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 29, verse 12,⁷⁷ we read: “and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying: read this, I pray thee: and he saith: I am not learned.”

It is a well known fact that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was unlettered,⁷⁸ he could not read nor write. He was described in the Qur'an as the unlettered Prophet (Qur'an 7: 157-158).⁷⁹ Allah also says:

[He does not speak of his own desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him. He was taught by one mighty in power.] (Qur'an 53: 3-5)

76. *World Religions from Ancient History to the Present*, by Geoffrey Parrinder, p. 472

77. KJV

78. The wisdom behind this is discussed in an earlier footnote.

79. The verse already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

6. A new song

Another indication (other than the prophecy in Deuteronomy) is that Isaiah ties the messenger connected with Kedar with 'a new song' (meaning a scripture in a new language) to be sung to the Lord (Isaiah 42:10-11). More explicitly, the Book of Isaiah mentions, "For with stammering lips, and another tongue, will he speak to this people..." (Isaiah 28:11) This latter verse correctly describes the "stammering lips" of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reflecting the state of tension and concentration, as well as of unfamiliarity, that he went through at the time of revelation.

7. Revealed in sections

A related fact is that the Qur'an was revealed in sections over a span of twenty-three years. It is interesting to compare this with Isaiah 28 which speaks of the same thing, "For it is: Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule; a little here, a little there." (Isaiah 28:10)

8. Name of God

Deuteronomy 18:19 reads: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him." This prophecy in Deuteronomy mentioned that this prophet will speak the words of God starting with the **name of God**. If

we look to the Qur'an, we will find that all its chapters, except Chapter 9, are preceded or begin with the phrase, "In the Name of God (Allah), the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."

The very first passage of the Qur'an revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reads:

[Recite in the name of your Lord who created.]

(Qur'an 96: 1)

Furthermore, Islam also teaches people to start almost every action in their daily life with the words "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful", which is in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

As mentioned earlier, the name 'Allah' is how He refers to Himself in the Qur'an, and how Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always referred to him. To say "in the Name of Allah" is a far clearer fulfilment of the prophecy "He shall speak in My name," than other common expressions such as "In the name of God" or "In the name of the Father."⁸⁰

80. Comment on "the Father": This is an example of the serious distortions in the Bible. Allah says about Himself, {He begets not, nor is He begotten, and nothing is equivalent to Him.} (Qur'an 112: 3)

Other Biblical Characteristics of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

An equally interesting and most revealing profile of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is found in the 42nd chapter of the Book of Isaiah. Let us examine some of these characteristics:

9. The 'one in whom God's soul delights' is called the 'servant of God' (V.1), His 'elect' (V.1) and His Messenger (V.19)

Translated into Arabic these titles read: '*Abduhu warasooluhu, al-mustafâ*. Surely all prophets were indeed servants, messengers and elects of Allah. Yet no prophet in history has been called universally by these specific titles as Muhammad (peace be upon him) has been. The testimony of faith by which the person enters into the fold of Islam reads: "I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship other than Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger."

Virtually the same formula is repeated five times a day during the call to prayers, five times a day immediately before the beginning of prayers (*iqamah*), nine times a day during the minimum mandatory prayers, and several more times if the Muslim performs additional recommended prayers (*sunnah*). The most common title of

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) since his mission until today is *Rasoolullâh* (the Messenger of Allah). The Qur'an gives him this title. During his lifetime he was addressed as such by his followers. The voluminous collections of *Hadith*⁸¹ are narrated typically in these forms: "I heard the Messenger of Allah say..." or "The Messenger of Allah said..." He is described in the Qur'an as 'Allah's slave' and Allah's messenger'.

10. He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he has set judgment in the earth (V.4), he shall prevail against his enemies (V.13) and shall bring judgment to the Gentiles (V.1)

In comparing the lives and missions of Jesus and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them), it is clear that this verse talks about Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). To elaborate, in the case of Jesus, he expressed on more than one occasion how disappointed he was in the Israelites' rejection of him. Also, Jesus (peace be upon him) was not present long enough to prevail over his enemies (beyond the moral victory, which is common to all prophets).

81. *Hadith (hadeeth)*: the collected statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that with the Qur'an form the basis of Islamic law

On the other hand, we find no trace of Prophet Muhammad's discouragement even in the most critical moments of his mission. In one year his beloved and supporting wife Khadijah died following 25 years of successful marriage; his uncle Abu Talib, who was instrumental in protecting him from the fury of the pagan Arabs (in Makkah) also died. These two tragedies were combined with the fact that his followers constituted only a small persecuted and tortured group. Under such trying circumstances, Muhammad (peace be upon him) went to the city of Taif to invite people to Islam and seek their support in his struggle against paganism. He was rejected, mocked at and stoned until his knees and feet bled. In spite of all this, he was never "discouraged" (to use Isaiah's term, V.4); "O Allah! Forgive my people for they do not know what they are doing," was his utterance. When the angel of mountains offered him the chance to retaliate by destroying their city, he refused in the hope that out of the descendants of these wicked people would come those who would worship Allah, and come they did!

After this bitter struggle, Muhammad (peace be upon him) "prevailed against his enemies", established a strong community of believers who indeed "brought judgment to the Gentiles", especially in the Persian and Byzantine Empires. Many such Gentiles were guided to Islam while

others suffered defeats. As such he was truly “a light of the Gentiles” and to the whole world.

11. “He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street” (V.2)

Not only was this a distinct characteristic and mark of decency of Muhammad’s, it was indeed the embodiment of the revelation given to him. In the words of the Qur’an:

[Be modest in your bearing and subdue your voice. Lo! The harshest of all voices is the voice of the donkey.] (Qur’an 31: 19)

[Allah does not love the utterance of harsh speech save by one who has been wronged.] (Qur’an 4: 148)

12. “The Isles shall wait for his law”

The only prophet who came after this prophecy (Isaiah’s time) with a complete and comprehensive code of law was Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The law revealed to him spread to all corners of the earth, even in many remote islands and to the farthest deserts.

13. “God’s glory will not be given to another.” (V.8)

The greatest glory a person receives from God (Allah) is to be entrusted as His messenger to humankind and receive His glorious revelation. Not only did this apply to

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), but it uniquely applied to him as the last and final messenger and prophet of Allah. Truly Allah's glory (revelation of scriptures) was not given and will not be given to another prophet after Muhammad (peace be upon him), as he is the 'seal' of all prophets, like the seal on a letter or message that has been written and folded: nothing further can be added to it. It is already more than 1400 years since Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent and the Qur'an was revealed to him. Yet we hear of no genuine prophet of the magnitude and influence on humanity to be compared with such figures as Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them). Nor do we hear about another post-Qur'anic glory or holy book that has influenced humankind to such a degree.

14. A descendant of Ishmael

This person to come is connected with the Arabs, and specifically with the descendants of Ishmael (peace be upon him) (who settled in Makkah and its environs). Verse 11 to the 42nd chapter of Isaiah leaves absolutely no doubt the identity of that prophet.

“Let the wilderness of and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar does inhabit, let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of

the mountains.” (Isaiah 42:11). According to the Book of Genesis, Kedar was the second son of Ishmael (Gen.25:13). The best prophet who came from Ishmael’s descendants is Muhammad (peace be upon him). His enemies (who were of his own clan!) who were misled by their leaders or mighty men (as described in Isaiah 21:17) ultimately embraced Islam and were embraced by it. Indeed they had reason to “lift up their voice”, to “sing” praise of God, and “shout from the top of the mountains”. Consider now this daily call to prayer, heard around the world to prayers from every mosque: *Allâhu Akbar!* ‘Allah is the Greatest!’

This “shouting” is chanted annually by multitudes of Muslims from all over the world from Mount Arafat and other places as part of the annual rites of Hajj (pilgrimage). “Here I am (at Your service) O Allah. Here I am. Here I am. There is no partner with you (in our worship). Here I am at Your service. Verily yours is the praise, the blessings and sovereignty. There is no partner besides you (in our worship).”

15. He will be sent “to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, (and) them that sit in darkness out of the prison house” (V.7)

Many of those who were opposed to the truth and fought Muhammad (peace be upon him) bitterly ended up among the most devout believers. Their blindness to truth was cured. Those who lived in the darkness of an unholy life came to the light of truth completed through the mission of Muhammad (peace be upon him).

No wonder the Qur'an describes itself as 'light manifest'. Describing the Qur'an, Allah addresses Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

[This is a book which We revealed unto you in order that you may lead humankind out of the depths of darkness unto light by the leave of their Lord to the way of Him, the exalted in power, worthy of all praise.] (Qur'an 14: 1)

16. "Sing unto the Lord a new song and his praise from the ends of the earth..." (V.10)

A new song may be a reference to a new scripture in a language other than the language of the Israelite scriptures. This interpretation seems consistent with a more explicit mention of someone who will be speaking to people (including the Israelites) in "another tongue" (Isaiah 28:11).

This explanation seems to fit closely with the verse (Isaiah 24:16) which speaks of the praise of God "from the

ends of the earth". Only in the case of Islam do we find this prophecy realized in amazing accuracy. In all ends of the earth, five times every day, the praise of Allah and of His last messenger, Muhammad (peace be upon him), is chanted from the minarets of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of mosques around the world. Additionally, frequent praise of Allah and Muhammad (peace be upon him) by millions of devout Muslims is made on daily basis. It is even a part of the five daily obligatory prayers to include the praise of Abraham (peace be upon him) and his descendants and of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his descendants.

The 42nd chapter of Isaiah is indeed a fascinating one. It is not a casual or ambiguous reference to that messenger of Allah who was to come centuries later. It is rather a comprehensive profile, which fits only one person: Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). After all, the chapter relates this profile to Kedar son of Ishmael (peace be upon him), and no other descendant of Ishmael (peace be upon him) fits this description except Muhammad (peace be upon him).

17. Riding the camel

Prophet Isaiah (peace be upon him) prophesied that two leaders whom he metaphorically called "chariots"

would come, one riding a donkey, and another riding a camel: "And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels, and he hearkened diligently with much heed." (Isaiah 21:7, KJV)

Who are the "couple of horsemen"?

They are Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them).
Let us examine the proof:

Jesus fulfilled the riding of the donkey prophecy: "Jesus found a young donkey, and sat upon it, as it is written." (John 12:14)

The quote "as it is written" is referring to Isaiah 21:7. It is important to know that nowhere in the New Testament do we see Jesus riding any camel. Nowhere in the New Testament do we see any fulfilment of any kind about the prophecy of riding the camel.

When we look at Muhammad (peace be upon him), he rode the camel several times in his lifetime. Perhaps the most well-known event of him riding the camel is when he migrated from Makkah to Madinah to escape the torture of the pagans. Then when Muhammad rode into Madinah on his camel, the Muslims in Madinah wanted to build the first Islamic mosque and the Prophet's humble home next to it. They argued with each other about the site, because each group/tribe wanted the location to be in their

neighbourhood. So, to avoid hurting anyone's feelings, the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave his camel the reins so that it would walk and then settle at the location that it naturally chose. This wisdom from Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) solved the problem.

Now, the open question to any Jewish rabbi or Christian priest or minister is as follows:

Where in the Bible do we see the prophecy about riding the camel being fulfilled?

Who in the Bible was the prophet that rode the camel to fulfil the Prophecy of Isaiah 21:7? The New Testament fulfils the riding of the donkey prophecy in John 12:14 and it claims that it fulfilled only that prophecy. There is still an unfulfilled prophecy regarding riding the camel in the New Testament.

If Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not the one who fulfilled the remainder of the prophecy in Isaiah 21:7, then who was that prophet?

These prophecies in the Old and New Testaments predict in unequivocal terms the advent of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the genuineness of his prophethood.

3. The location from which he was to emerge

18. Deuteronomy 33:1-2

Deuteronomy 33:1-2 combines references to Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). It speaks of God's revelation coming from Sinai, rising from Seir (probably the village of Sa'ir near Jerusalem) and shining forth from Paran. According to Genesis 21:21, the wilderness of Paran was the place where Ishmael settled (that is, in Arabia, specifically Makkah).

Another sign of the prophet to come from Paran (Makkah) is that he will come with "ten thousand of saints" (Deuteronomy 33:2 KJV). That was the number of faithful who accompanied Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to Makkah in his victorious, bloodless return to his birthplace to destroy the remaining symbols of idolatry in the Ka'bah. The text says: "he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousand of saints, from his right hand (went) a fiery law for them."

According to Islamic history, the city of Makkah (Paran) was liberated by Prophet Muhammad's ten thousand troops.

If Muhammad who liberated the city of Paran with 10,000 believing men (the 'saints') was not the one who fulfilled this Biblical prophecy and ended the worship of

the 365 gods (in the form of idols), then who was that prophet? Is there another prophet who marched upon Makkah with this exact same number of men? The historical answer is: Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the only prophet whom this prophecy fits perfectly.

19. Habakkuk 3:3

Habakkuk 3:3 speaks of God (God's help) coming from Te'man (an oasis north of Madinah according to Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*), and the 'holy one' coming from Paran. That 'holy one' who under persecution migrated from Paran (Makkah) to be received enthusiastically in Madeenah was none other than Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Indeed, the incident of the migration of the Prophet and his persecuted followers is vividly and prophetically described in **Isaiah 21:13-17**. That section foretold as well about the battle of Badr, in which the few ill-armed faithful miraculously defeated the "mighty" men of Kedar, who sought to destroy Islam and intimidate their own folk who had turned to Islam. The text reads:

An oracle concerning Arabia: You caravans of Dedanites, who camp in the thickets of Arabia,

bring water for the thirsty; you who live in Tema, bring food for the fugitives.

They flee from the sword, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow and from the heat of battle.

This is what the Lord says to me: "Within one year, as a servant bound by contract would count it, all the pomp of Kedar will come to an end. The survivors of the bowmen, the warriors of Kedar, will be few." The LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken. (Isaiah 21:13-17)

4. The Message to be revealed through him

The Bible foretells the story of revelation

20. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was illiterate.

During his entire life he never learned to read or write. The exact circumstances of the first revelation have been mentioned: It was the habit of Muhammad (peace be upon him) to frequently get away from the midst of his fellow Arabs and their heathenistic ways and spend many days secluded in the cave of Hirâ in the mountains of Makkah, where he would pray to Allah according to the practice of Abraham (peace be upon him). When he reached the age of forty (610 CE), the angel Gabriel one day appeared

before him in that cave and ordered him to recite. Muhammad (peace be upon him), in his terror thought he was being asked to read, so he stammered: "I am unlettered." The angel Gabriel again ordered him to read, but Muhammad (peace be upon him) again replied: "I am unlettered." The angel Gabriel took a firm hold of him and commanded him, "Recite, in the name of your Lord who created!" Now Muhammad (peace be upon him) began to understand that he was not being asked to read, but to recite, to repeat. He began to repeat after him, and Gabriel revealed to him the first verses of the Qur'an, those at the beginning of the 96th chapter of the Qur'an:

[Recite in the name of your Lord who created; He created man from a (mere) clot of congealed blood. Recite, and your Lord is most generous. He taught with the use of the pen. He taught the human that which he did not know.] (Qur'an 96: 1-5)

As mentioned above, the actual word angel Gabriel used to address Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the Arabic word *iqra'* which means 'read, recite, or rehearse'. It is derived from the Arabic root word *qara*. However, if we were to go back to the original Hebrew form of the verses of Isaiah 29:11, we would find that the actual word which is translated into English as "Read this [I pray

thee]" is the Hebrew word *qara'* [kaw-raw']. Is it just an amazing coincidence that the Hebrew text used not only a word With the same meaning, **but the exact same word itself?**

Isaiah 29:11-18 reads:

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which [men] deliver to one that is learned, saying: Read this, [I pray thee], and he saith, I cannot, for it [is] sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying: Read this, [I pray thee], and he saith: I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, For as much as this people draw near [me] with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, [even] a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise [men] shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? Surely your turning of things upside

down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding? [Is] it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

Remember that when a statement in the earlier scriptures is found also in the Qur'an, then this is proof of its validity, for if it is confirmed by the later scripture, it is clearly a remnant of the original revelation that was not deleted or changed over time by those who rewrote the Bible.

5. Fulfilment of prophecies which he foretold

21. One may ask the following question: What criterion should be used to distinguish between a genuine prophet and false prophets who may also presume to speak in the name of Allah?

The answer to this question is clearly given in the concluding verses of Chapter 18 of the Book of Deuteronomy.

And if thou say in thin heart, how shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it pre-sumptuously; thou shall not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 18:21-22)

In John 14:16, Jesus (peace be upon him) is reported to say, describing his successor: “He will declare to you the things that are to come.”⁸²

It is a fact that not a single prophecy made by the Qur'an or the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has proved to be inaccurate in the least degree. Every prophecy made about the near future at his time did come to pass. Examples of these are:

The prophecy⁸³ that Muslims were to conquer the two ‘superpowers’ of their time; the Persian and Byzantine empires: This prophecy was made when Muslims were so few and weak that to prophesied their mere physical survival would have sounded too hopeful!

82. New International Version (NIV) & the King James Version (KJV)

83. in the chapter entitled ‘The Romans’ (Qur'an 30: 2-5)

A prophecy that Suraqah, a man who was about to kill the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), would become a Muslim. Not only was it prophesied that he would be Muslim, but that he would help the Muslim army conquer the Persian Empire, and have access to the Emperor's crown, placing it on his head! Not only did this prophecy appear to be a virtual impossibility when it was made, but it was as if the Prophet (peace be upon him) was looking distinctly at the scene which took place years after his death. The fact that Suraqah did become a Muslim, lived long enough to participate in the conquest of Persia, that the Muslims came out victorious, that Suraqah had access to the Emperor's crown and actually wore it, can hardly be regarded as a coincidence or a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Surely it is of no mere coincidence that all the prophecies that were described by the Prophet (peace be upon him) actually happened, down to the last detail. Nor can such accuracy in each and every prophecy emanate from any other than a true and genuine prophet using the criterion stipulated in Deuteronomy (18:21-22).

22. Test of prophethood

Jesus himself provided a sort of "test", if you will, for the one claiming prophethood:

...by the fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes from the thorns, or figs from the thistles? Every good tree will bear good fruit and every evil tree will bear evil fruit...by their fruits ye shall know them. (*Matthew 7:16-20*)

Anyone who applies this test to the teachings of Muhammad will find in the Last Testament of Allah—the Noble Qur'an—the teachings which will bring to the world much-needed peace and happiness. (See Chapter XII, 'Moral System in Islam')

"The ultimate criterion of a true prophet is the moral character of his teaching."⁸⁴

George Bernard Shaw said of Muhammad (peace be upon him):

I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems, and that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness.⁸⁵

6. The time when he was to appear

23. God's promise to make Ishmael a great nation

84. *Commentary on the Holy Bible* by John R. Dummelow, 1970

85. *The Genuine Islam*, Singapore, vol. 1, no. 8, 1936

It is well known that from the descendants of Ishmael came the last great prophet of Monotheism, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), whose followers constitute a great nation, nearly one-fifth of the total world population in all corners of the earth.

“I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, because he is your offspring.” (Genesis 21:13)

Genesis 21:18 says about Ishmael: “I will make him into a great nation.”

In Matthew 21:19-21, Jesus spoke of the fruitless fig tree (a biblical symbol of prophetic heritage) to be cleared after being given a last chance of three years (the duration of Jesus' ministry) to give fruit. In a later verse in the same chapter, Jesus said: “Therefore, say I unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof.” (Matthew 21:43) That nation is Ishmael's descendants (the rejected stone in Matthew 21:42) which was victorious against all superpowers of its time, as prophesied by Jesus: “And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” (Matthew 21:44)

Moreover, in the Old Testament, Genesis 12:1-3, it can be found that God Almighty promised to create "Great

Nations" from Ishmael, Abraham's first son and the forefather of the Muslims:

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1-3)

The quote "go to the land I will show you" is referring to the city of Paran (Makkah). The quote "I will make you into a great nation" is quite interesting; it describes perfectly the followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), namely Muslims.

As you probably know, Muslims worship Allah Almighty by prostrating to Him. Every time they pray and prostrate, they end their prayer by sitting on their knees and say the following exact quote (translated): "...and bless Prophet Muhammad and the family of Prophet Muhammad, as You have blessed Prophet Abraham and the family of Prophet Abraham..."

As can be clearly seen, Muslims bless Prophet Abraham every single day of their lives when praying to

Allah Almighty. They also say "peace be upon him" or "peace and blessings be upon him" when they refer to his name or any other prophet's name.

Yes, the Muslims are the "great nation" that Allah Almighty talked about; they are blessed by Him because they worship none but Him, and they bless Abraham everyday (not less than nine times) in their prayers.

24. According to the Gospel of John, the Jews were waiting for the fulfilment of three distinct prophecies.

The first was the coming of Christ. The second was the coming of Elijah. The third was **the coming of the prophet**. This is obvious from the three questions that were posed to John the Baptist:

Now this was John's testimony, when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ." They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." (John 1:19-21)

If one looks in a Bible with cross-references,⁸⁶ he will find in the marginal notes where the words "the Prophet"

86. Nowadays we can do this easily online. (Editor)

occur in John 1:21 that these words refer to the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15 and 18:18. It can be concluded from this that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the prophet mentioned there, because he is the only prophet who came after Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), and because he is the one who is 'like unto him'. Furthermore, it is obvious that the Jews and John knew that the 'Prophet' and the Christ were two different persons, as each was referred to by a separate question.

25. In John 16:7

In John 16:7 Jesus is reported to have said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the *Counsellor* will not come to you; *but if I go, I will send him to you.*"

The term 'Counsellor' could not be referring to the Holy Spirit here, because – according to the Gospels – the Holy Spirit was already present in the world prior to Jesus' birth as well as during his ministry. Luke 3:22 mentions that the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the shape of a dove. However, this verse (John 16:7) implies that the "Counsellor" is yet to come.

7. The Unique Proof

One of the proofs that Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was a prophet is that the message

he came with has reached across to the East and the West, and his community now extends all over the world; something which did not occur with any previous community. Had Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, not been a prophet, the prophets who came before him, especially Moses and Jesus, would have warned their peoples vehemently about him, and we would have seen this in their scriptures because all of the prophets warned of false prophets and cautioned their peoples about following them and being guided by them. The previous prophets mentioned the Antichrist by name, for example, and even Noah, who was the first Messenger, warned his people about him. However, none of the prophets warned about Muhammad. In fact, quite the contrary: Jesus gave good tidings of Muhammad, praised him and ordered people to follow him, and forbade them to oppose or disobey him.

Conclusion

It should now be clear that the Biblical prophecies speak of none other than Muhammad (peace be upon him). As the well-known scholar shaykh Sa'di wrote:

If Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not a true prophet, then his message would have contradicted the common message of Jesus and

other prophets before him. Instead, it revived it and re-instated it.

Many thanks to Allah who made the path clear for us. It is interesting to note that in year 571 CE, Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled. Muhammad (peace be upon him) was born into a community of Ishmaelite Arabs who had become polytheists and idolaters, and when he reached maturity and was given revelation, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) started preaching his message of the worship of Allah alone.

In the year 632 CE; he left this world, but his bright message remains with people till the end of this world.

Being a true follower of Jesus (peace be upon him) must be more than a mere claim, wherein one says that he or she follows Jesus or loves Jesus and that is it, in order to attain paradise and be saved from hellfire. True followers of Christ should accept his prophecy of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and follow his teachings of 'Islam', or complete and devoted submission to the One and Only God—Allah.

XVI. The Facts about the ‘Original Sin’⁸⁷

20 arguments regarding the doctrine of the ‘original sin’

Background

According to the explanation of this doctrine, Adam (peace be upon him) sinned when he disobeyed Allah and ate from the forbidden tree. According to the Christian theology, the following eight doctrines branch off the ‘original sin’ principle:

1. All Adam’s descendants inherit his sin, which means that all human beings are born with this original sin.
2. For God’s justice to be achieved, a price must be paid as a penalty for every sin that has been committed, in order for that sin to be wiped out and the individual to be forgiven.
3. The only way to wipe out sin is shedding of blood, and according to Paul, “without the shedding of blood there is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22).

87. Compiled from ‘My Great Love for Jesus Led Me to Islam’, by S. Caraballo

4. But this blood must be perfect, sinless, and incorruptible.
5. Christians believe that Jesus alone could pay the infinite price of sin, because they believe that his blood is perfect, sinless, and incorruptible, and he is the alleged son of God, the infinite God.
6. Christian theology says that Jesus shed his holy sinless blood, suffered indescribable agony, and died to pay for the sins of people. This concept is known in Christian theology as 'Atonement'.
7. Christians believe that nobody can be saved (attain salvation) unless he or she accepts Jesus Christ as his or her redeemer. In other words, salvation is restricted to those who believe that Jesus was willingly crucified and killed on the cross, and shed his blood as a price of that sin. Acceptance of this doctrine is the only way to attain 'salvation'.
8. Otherwise, everyone is condemned to suffer eternally in hell because of his/her sinful nature and originally inherited sin from the father of humankind, Prophet Adam.

The doctrine of original sin can be divided into six distinct parts:

- 1) The factuality of the existence of original sin.

- 2) Humanity's inheritance of the original sin.
- 3) The belief that God's justice requires a penalty of blood which must be paid against that sin.
- 4) The belief that Jesus has paid the price for the sins of all humankind by sacrifice of his blood, through his 'death on the cross'.
- 5) The rationality of 'God's sacrifice' dogma.
- 6) The salvation from sin (original and newly attained) is only possible for those who believe in his vicarious sacrifice.

Analysis

The arguments against these six parts of the dogma of 'Original Sin':

Argument against the first part, the factuality of the original sin:

1. There is no conflict between what the Qur'an says and the Christian theology that Adam committed a sin when he ate from the forbidden tree. However, Allah says in the Qur'an that Prophet Adam (peace be upon him) repented after that and submitted himself completely to his Lord, and consequently he was forgiven by Allah for the sin he committed. This is a

tenet of Islamic belief and is mentioned in three different verses in the Qur'an (2: 37, 7: 24 & 20: 122). Based on Adam's repentance and Allah's acceptance of his repentance, the sin of Adam was not inherited by the children of Adam, nor did it require the suffering and death of Jesus Christ (or of anyone else) to be forgiven.

Argument against the second part, 'all human beings inherited Adam's sin':

2. The doctrine of the inherited sin has no support in the words of Jesus.
3. Indeed, Jesus himself regarded children as innocent and pure, *and not born in sin*. This is clear from his reported saying: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for such is the Kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." (Mark 10:14-15)
4. The doctrine of the inherited sin implies that all people after Adam and before Jesus were born with original sin and died with original sin, and all of them will be cast into Hellfire, because they did not even know of this dogma, and thus could not profess it!

5. The doctrine of the inherited sin has *no support in the words of the prophets who had come either before him or after him*. If it was required by God, then they would have told their people about it and taught them to believe in it, because all prophets were sent to guide people to the way of paradise and warn them from sins and hellfire.
6. All prophets taught that every human being is accountable for his/her own sins, and hence children will not be punished for the sins of their fathers. Allah says in the Qur'an,
[The bearer of burdens will not bear the burden of another.] (Qur'an 53: 38).

He also says,

[Every soul will be a pledge for its own deeds.]
(Qur'an 74: 38)

7. Sin, as it says, is not inherited, but it is something which a person acquires for himself/herself by doing what He or She should not do or not doing what He or She should do. Rationally considered, it would be the height of injustice to condemn the entire human race for a sin committed thousands of years ago by the first parents. Sin is a wilful transgression of the Law of Allah. The responsibility or blame for it must lie only

on the person committing it, *and not on his or her descendants*. It is the height of misanthropy to consider it. How unreasonable and hard-hearted a person can become by believing that every baby is sinful at birth!

8. Saying that the original sin committed by our father Adam was inherited through humanity goes against the attribute of mercy which Allah attributes to Himself. With this, the creed of the inheritance of original sin has no room whatsoever in Islamic teachings.

Argument against the third part: 'blood penalty'

The third part of the original sin doctrine says that God's justice requires that a price must be paid for the sins of humankind (original and otherwise) and that if God were to pardon (forgive) a sinner without punishment, it would be a denial of His justice.

The response to that has two points:

9. This view reflects complete ignorance of two of Allah's attributes, namely mercy and forgiveness. To elaborate, if Allah finds some real good in you and sees that you are sincerely repentant, having a real urge to conquer the evil within you, then Almighty

Allah will forgive your failings and sins, out of His loving mercy and forgiveness.

10. The God we worship (Allah) is the Most Strong and Most Rich, and no one can harm Him. Consequently, if He prescribes a law and demands obedience, then it is not for His own benefit to abide by it, but for the benefit of humankind. If we disobey Him then we are the losers, not Allah. If He punishes a person before death for his/her faults and sins, it is not for His own satisfaction or compensation, but in order to check evil and purify/reform the sinner, which is out of His mercy. Bearing these facts in mind, claiming that Allah's justice requires a price to be paid for the sins of others is not valid.

Argument against the fourth part of 'original sin': Jesus was sacrificed for humanity

The fourth part of the original sin doctrine says that Jesus paid the penalty for all sins (the original sins and any others) by sacrificing his blood on the cross of Calvary. The response to this proposition has ten points:

11. The Christian concept of salvation has no support in the words of Jesus (peace be upon him). It is not historically correct to say that Jesus had come to die

willingly and deliberately for the sins of all humanity. Actually, the present form of the Bible testifies that he *did not wish to die on the cross*. (See Mark 14:36)

12. Indeed, the Bible points to the fact that God (Allah), not Jesus, is the *ultimate saviour*, “You may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after Me. I, I am the Lord, *and besides Me there is no Saviour*. (Isaiah 43:10-11)
13. To punish a man who is not guilty for the sins of others is the height of injustice, harshness and lack of mercy, which cannot be attributed to the Almighty.
14. Rationally, we cannot accept that the suffering and death of one man can wipe out the sins of others. It is similar to a father, for example, removing one of his good teeth to relieve the pain of his child’s bad tooth. Hence, the idea of crucifixion is false and illogical.
15. Jesus (like all prophets) was sent to convey a message and to be an example for his followers during his time on earth, and not by deliberately dying for them on the cross or offering his blood for their sins.
16. Allah mentioned in the Qur’an that He is the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate; he forgives the sinner from any sin no matter how bad once the sinner

repents. *He may even forgive the sinner who did not repent*, according to His will, mercy and favour.

17. The concept of atonement is false because it indirectly encourages people to sin, since their sins will be wiped out through someone else once they believe in him! Further, if someone died for another person's sins, what is the point of adhering to good and forbidding evil?

Argument against the fifth part, the 'sacrifice' of Jesus

18. Christian doctrine states that Jesus was crucified by the administration of the Roman governor of Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate, with the cooperation of certain Jewish leaders.⁸⁸ However, the Qur'an explains that Jesus (peace be upon him) did not die, but Allah raised him up when they attempted to kill him. Allah replaced him with another person who looked like him, and in fact, it was this person that was killed. To this day, however, Christians believe that Jesus was killed on the cross. Allah says in the Qur'an:

88. 'Who Killed Jesus?' by Daniel Harrington, in *Scriptures from Scratch*, St. Anthony Messenger Press, accessed online at [http:// www. americancatholic. org/Newsletters/ SFS/ an 0399.asp](http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/SFS/an_0399.asp)

[And they said: We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, Messenger of Allah, but they did not kill him or crucify him, but that is how it appeared to them. Verily, those who disagree with this matter are in doubt; they have no knowledge of it and they follow speculation. They certainly did not kill him. Certainly, Allah raised him up; Allah is Almighty and All-Wise.] (Qur'an 4: 157-158)

19. Another proof that Jesus was not killed and is still alive is that in Islamic teachings there is clear evidence indicating the second coming of Jesus (peace be upon him) before the Final Hour. He will come back to correct the misconception which people have developed about his personality and his mission. According to a statement by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), he will stay for forty years, which will be the happiest years of life on this earth. At that time, those who had misconceptions about him will correct their misconception and believe in him as a messenger, not as the 'son of God' or as God incarnate. It is narrated by Abu Hurayrah, (One of Prophet Muhammad's Companions, may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

(By the one in whose hand is my soul, it will not be long before the son of Mary descends amongst you, a

just judge and ruler. He will break the cross and kill the swine and abolish the tribute paid by Jews and Christians. Money will be so plentiful that no one will accept it. At that time a single prostration will be better than this world and everything in it.>>⁸⁹ Abu Hurayrah then said, “Read if you wish (the following verse of the Qur’an):

[And verily there is no one from among the people of the scripture⁹⁰ except that he will believe in him before his death and on the Day of Resurrection he will be a witness over them.]
(Qur’an 4: 159)”⁹¹

This ends the answer on the fifth part of the doctrine.

Argument against the sixth part: salvation only possible via belief in Christ’s vicarious ‘sacrifice’

20. The Bible itself contradicts the notion of “Original Sin”. In this regard, the Bible says about the dispute concerning the original sin: “The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labour.” (I Corinthians 3:8)

89. This is because with the advent of Jesus (peace and blessings be upon him), people will know with certainty that the Final Hour is very near.

90. i.e. Jews and Christians.

91. Narrated by Al-Bukhari (3448).

Original Sin and Atonement from an Islamic Perspective

Islam declares that:

- ❖ People cannot transfer their responsibilities to saviours or saints. Each person's redemption and salvation depends on his or her own deeds.
- ❖ Forgiveness of sins (salvation) can only be attained through repentance to Allah and sincere and persistent efforts to fight off evil and do good. Allah forgives the faults and sins of those in whom He sees real goodness and those who have turned away from their sins and reformed themselves—without punishing them *or any other person on their behalf*.

In numerous verses in the Qur'an and statements of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), it is mentioned that **those who repent are granted** forgiveness from sins; furthermore, their sins are to be replaced with an equivalent reward, and [*there shall be no fear upon them, neither shall they grieve.*]

In many verses of the Noble Qur'an Allah Almighty calls on people to repent sincerely.

[Declare [O Muhammad] to My slaves that, truly, I am the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful, and that My Torment is indeed the most painful torment.] (Qur'an 15: 49-50)

Here Allah invites the sinners to repent; regardless of the magnitude of their sins, He will forgive them. At the same time, He warns those who do not repent that no punishment can be compared to His punishment.

He also says,

[Say: O My slaves who have transgressed against themselves [by committing evil deeds and sins], do not despair of the Mercy of Allah; verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. And turn in repentance and obey Him before the torment comes upon you, when you will not be helped.] (Qur'an 39: 53-54)

See how beautifully, soundly and logically the Book of Allah, the Qur'an, addresses the issue of sinning and atonement. It must be noted that Islam teaches that this Islamic approach to the subject was revealed in all divine messages, including the message of Jesus Christ. May peace and blessings be upon him and all the prophets.

Conclusion

By maintaining the concept of original sin, the entire notion of justice in Christian theology becomes flawed. Having analysed the six tenets of this doctrine and the arguments against them, the structure of the whole

principle of 'original sin and atonement' is shown to be false, because it has no support either in revealed sources or in logic, but rather only in the ideology of the Christian Church.

XVII. Islam's Revival of the Basic Teachings of Jesus⁹²

Introduction:

All prophets were sent with the same faith: Monotheism in the worship of Allah, testifying to the supremacy of Allah's attributes and His unity of essence. However, their messages may differ in legislation (*shariah*) like the manner of performing prayers, fasting, types of charity and so on, depending on each nation's characteristics, according to Allah's wisdom, for He knows His creatures better than they know themselves.

Every prophet revived the basic beliefs that had been distorted after the departure of the preceding prophet. Islam, being the final message, revived the basic beliefs and practices of all the preceding messages, including the message of Jesus, elaborating on them in some detail so that people would find them clear and straightforward to follow.

The following focuses on some basic teachings which were established by Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) and revived in the message of Islam:

92. Compiled from *The True Message of Jesus Christ* and 'My Great Love for Jesus led Me to Islam'.

1. Revival of the creed of Allah's Unity (of essence)

This fundamental teaching was taught by Jesus (peace be upon him), as quoted below, but abandoned by most Christians, then revived by the message of Islam. All praise and thanks are for Allah for His guidance.

Sixteen proofs from the Bible and rational thought on Allah's Unity in His essence

Negating the doctrine of the Trinity

1. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. (Deuteronomy 6:4)
2. Has not the One God made and sustained for us the spirit of life? (Malachi 2:15)
3. You may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after Me. I, I am the Lord, and besides Me there is no Saviour. (Isaiah 43:10-11)
4. I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no god. Who is like Me? (Isaiah 44:6)
5. And there is no other god besides Me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is none besides Me. Turn to Me and be saved...To Me every knee shall bow. (Isaiah 45: 21-23)

6. Now this is life eternal, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.⁹³
(John 17:3)
7. Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.
(Matthew 4:10)
8. Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is One Lord. (Mark 12:29)
9. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.⁹⁴ (1 Timothy 2:5)
10. "I am the Lord, and there is no other god. I have not spoken in secret or kept My purpose hidden... I am the Lord, and I speak the truth; I make known what is right." (Isaiah 45:19).
11. An additional important proof from the Bible that God (Allah) is one and distinct in His essence, Jesus is one and distinct in his essence, and the Holy Spirit is one and distinct in his essence, is that it is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible (in either the Old or New Testaments) that Allah, Jesus or the Holy Spirit

93. This verse indicates very clearly the distinction between Allah and Jesus as a prophet.

94. This verse indicates clearly that God is to be worshipped alone without any mediator, and that Jesus is a man, not 'God'.

comprise one entity called God, or one of the three. It is just a mere product of manmade illogical philosophical thinking which people blindly inherit from parents and grandparents through ages and generations, without any rational assessment or validation.

12. Not only that, but the following biblical verses contradict the creed of the Trinity in an indirect way:
 - ❖ You have never heard his voice nor seen his face. (John 5:37)
 - ❖ No one has ever seen him. And no one can see him. (1Timothy 6:16)
 - ❖ No one can see me and stay alive. (Exodus 33:20)
13. According to these biblical verses, no one can see or hear God. Yet God is supposed to be Jesus according to Christian belief. These verses then would make no sense, because Jesus' family and followers, the Jews, and many other contemporaries saw Jesus and heard him during his time. Which means that Jesus cannot be what these verses are talking about; they must be referring to someone else: to God (Allah), the Highest, Whom no one can see or hear.

It is curious, too, that Jesus himself never mentioned the Trinity. He did not say anything regarding divine

entities forming a trinity. If there were a trinity, he would have said it clearly to his people, because prophets came to convey the truth, not to hide it.

14. The concept that Jesus (peace be upon him) held about Allah was in no way different from the concept that all the other previous prophets had. Absolutely all of them preached the Unity of Allah, not the 'Trinity'. Jesus (peace be upon him) simply repeated the same monotheistic, unitarian message that had been revealed to the prophets that came before him.
15. The doctrine of the Trinity is irrational because nothing that comes out of Him or is created by Him can become His equal and partner in Godhead.
16. The Qur'an rejects the concept of the Trinity as strongly as it rejects the idea that Allah has a son. This is because Allah tells us He is One. This is a **fundamental tenet** of all the revelations. Three, by reason and by simple arithmetic, are not one. The Qur'an addresses Christians on this subject:

[O People of the Scripture! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter anything concerning Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allah, and His Word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from

*Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers, and do not say, 'Three!'—Cease! [it is] better for you! Allah is only One God. Far is it removed from His Transcendent Majesty that He should have a son. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allah is sufficient as Defender.]*⁹⁵ (Qur'an 4: 171)

Islam revived the concept of Allah's Unity in essence, and absolutely negates the doctrine of 'sonship' and the doctrine which states that Allah is Jesus. Allah says:

[Surely, they have disbelieved who say: Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary.] (Qur'an 5: 72)

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

[Say: He is Allah the One [in His essence]. Allah is the eternal absolute. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.] (Qur'an 112: 1-4)

95. *The Glorious Qur'an* by M. Pickthall

2. Revival of Allah's Supremacy

In His attributes and qualities

Allah has the supreme attributes. He is the Most Gracious and Most Merciful. His attributes are many, and He was praised in all revealed books and on the tongues of His prophets. According to the Bible, Jesus taught that Allah is supreme in His attributes. In Matthew 19:16-17, when the man called Prophet Jesus 'good', saying, "Good teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) replied, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but One, that is God." He denied the attribution of 'infinite goodness' or 'perfect goodness' to himself, and affirmed that this attribute belongs to Allah alone.

In Isaiah (44:6), it is reported that God (Allah) says, "I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no god. *Who is like Me?*"

Islam effectively revived this basic concept. Numerous verses in the Qur'an and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) affirm that Allah:

- ❖ Has no partners nor equals.
- ❖ Is 'invisible' because He is over His throne, over the heavens, and no one can see Him in this life.

- ❖ Is not physically manifested or incarnated in other forms.
- ❖ Is eternal; He does not die.
- ❖ Begets not, nor is He begotten; He is not in need of anyone like a mother, a wife, or a son.
- ❖ Has no partners in His Godhead.
- ❖ Is self-sufficient; all depend on Him and are in need of Him, but He does not depend on anyone, nor is He in need of anything such as food, drink, or help. For example, Allah says in the Qur'an:

[There is nothing like unto Him.] (Qur'an 42: 11)

[Do not invent similitudes for Allah, Indeed Allah knows and you do not know.] (Qur'an 16: 74)

[Allah has the best attributes; He is the Dominant, possessing complete wisdom.] (Qur'an 16: 60)

Actually, this basic part of belief (belief that Allah deserves the best names and attributes) is emphasized repeatedly in the Noble Qur'an. This is evident to the reader of the Qur'an, who finds that numerous Qur'anic verses end with a reference to a divine attribute, such as *[the All-Hearing, All-Seeing]*, *[the Most Forgiving, the All-Compassionate]*, and *[the Most High, the Most Great]*.

3. Revival of the doctrine of Monotheism

(The Worship of Allah alone)

As mentioned earlier, the call to the worship of Allah alone (Monotheism) without any intermediary is the message of all prophets. Because of the persisting deviation in this doctrine, it has had to be reaffirmed by all of the prophets of Allah down through the ages. The monotheistic message of Islam simply tells people that they should worship only Allah, and should not worship anyone or anything other than Allah, in any way, shape or form.

However, Christians now call upon (supplicate to) Jesus (and others) besides Allah. Moreover, they direct all types of worship to Jesus. Associating others with Allah is nothing but polytheism. Surprisingly, although the text of the Bible has been altered so much, there is still evidence in it that Jesus called others to monotheism:

- ❖ In Luke 3:8, the Devil asks Jesus to worship him, promising him the authority and glory of all of the kingdoms of this world, “And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, *and Him only shall you serve.*’”
- ❖ “*And there is no other god besides Me, a righteous God and a Saviour; there is none besides Me. Turn to*

Me and be saved...To Me every knee shall bow.”
(Isaiah 45: 21-23)

- ❖ *“Turn to me now and be saved, people all over the world! I am the only God there is.”* (Isaiah 45:22)
- ❖ *“Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”*
(Matthew 4:10)
- ❖ In the Bible, the true God emphatically testifies, “I am the Lord, and there is *no other god*. I have not spoken in secret or kept my purpose hidden...I am the Lord, and I speak the truth; I make known what is right.”
(Isaiah 45:19)

Thus, the essence of the message of Jesus was that only Allah deserves to be worshiped, and that the worship of anyone or anything besides Allah or along with Allah is false. It is important to note that worshipping others besides God is a major alteration of Jesus’ message. The call to Monotheism became distorted after his departure by later followers, beginning with Paul, who turned that pure and simple message into a complicated Trinitarian philosophy which justified the worship of Jesus, and then the worship of Jesus’ mother, Mary, the angels and the saints. Catholics have a long list of saints to whom they turn in times of need.

Worshiping others besides Allah is irrational and in vain, because neither the living nor the dead can answer the prayers (supplication) of humankind. The worship of Allah should not be shared with His creation because they are people just like us; they are not creators, they are weak creatures like us; they need food, drink, shelter, and help, and after their death (or ascension in the case of Jesus) they cannot even hear the ones who call them!

Islam effectively revived the doctrine of Monotheism. For example, Allah says in the Qur'an:

[The Messiah said: O Children of Israel, Worship Allah, My Lord and your Lord. Verily, whoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden paradise to him, and the Fire will be his abode, and for the wrongdoers (polytheists); there are no helpers.] (Qur'an 5: 72)

[Surely, those whom you supplicate besides Allah are slaves like yourselves.] (Qur'an 7: 194)

[Can there be another god besides Allah? High is Allah above what they associate with Him.] (Qur'an 27: 63)

[Can there be another god besides Allah? Say: Bring forth your proof, if ye are telling the truth!]
(Qur'an 27: 64)

[I have not created the jinn and humankind except to worship Me.] (Qur'an 51: 56)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says:
<<Supplication is an essential act of worship.>>⁹⁶
Consequently, if a person prays to a prophet, saint, statue, or anything else, s/he has stepped out of the bounds of Islam.

Thus, according to these affirmations, all other supposed gods and deities whom people worship and call upon, like Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Brahma, Shiva, Krishna, or Buddha are neither gods, nor are they manifestations of the one true God (Allah). Even if someone were to worship Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) then the same punishment mentioned above would apply to him.

96. Narrated by at-Tirmidhi (2969) and Abu Dâwood (1479)

4. Revival of the creed of Jesus' humanness and Prophethood, negating divinity and 'Sonship'

11 proofs from the Bible of Jesus' Humanness and Prophethood

There are many verses in the New Testament which affirm Jesus' prophethood and contradict the attributed divinity to him.

1. "Now this is life eternal, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you *have sent*."⁹⁷
(John 17:3)
2. In Matthew 21:11, the people of his time are recorded as referring to Jesus as prophet: "And the crowds said: this is the *prophet Jesus* of Nazareth of Galilee."
3. In Mark, 6:4, it is stated that Jesus referred to himself as a Prophet, "And Jesus said to them, 'A *prophet* is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.'"
4. In the previous verses, Jesus is referred to as having been sent as a messenger. In Matthew 10:40, Jesus

97. This verse indicates very clearly the distinction between God the Deity and Jesus the Prophet. See also John 4:34, 5:30, 7:16 & 28, 11:42, 13:16, 14:24.

was purported to have said: “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and He that receiveth him that *sent me*.”

5. In John 5:30, it is narrated that Jesus also said, “I can do nothing on my own authority, *as I hear I judge*; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of Him *who sent me*.”
6. for there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)⁹⁸
7. Jesus was also reported in the Gospel according to Matthew 19:16-17 to have been referred to as ‘the teacher’, which is the role of all prophets: “Now behold, one came and said to him, ‘*Good teacher*, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?’”
8. In Matthew 19:17, Jesus responded to one who addressed him as “good teacher”, saying, “Why callest thou me good? **There is none good but one, that is God.**” Jesus (peace be upon him) here rejects being called ‘good’, and states that only God is truly good; he clearly implies that he is not God. Also,

98. This verse indicates clearly that God shall be worshipped alone without any mediator, and that Jesus is a man, and is not God.

Jesus here rejects being called 'perfectly good', because perfection belongs only to God (Allah).

9. Even in some of the writings of Paul, which the Church has taken to be sacred, Jesus is referred to as a man, distinct and different from God (Allah). In 1 Timothy, 2:5, Paul writes: "For there is one God and one mediator⁹⁹ between God and men, **the man Christ Jesus.**"
10. In Mathew 5:17-18, Jesus stated: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the (way of) the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them, for I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."
11. Also in Matthew 5:19, Jesus Christ was reported to have insisted on strict obedience to the commandments of Allah, which is the role of any prophet, "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

99. All prophets are mediators between God and people in the sense that they are His messengers who deliver His message.

No Evidence for the Divinity of Jesus in the Bible.

It should be noted that nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus actually call himself 'God' or the 'Son of God' or one of three. If this was the case then it would have been mentioned very clearly in the Bible at least once, because Jesus was sent to enlighten the lives of people and unveil doubts, not to lead them into confusion.

Today, there are many modern scholars in Christianity who hold that Jesus Christ was not 'God'.

In 1977, a group of seven biblical scholars, including leading Anglican theologians and other New Testament scholars, published a book called *'The Myth of God Incarnate'*, which caused a great uproar in the General Synod of the Church of England. In the preface, the editor, John Hick, wrote the following:

The writers of this book are convinced that another major theological development is called for in this last part of the twentieth century. The need arises from growing knowledge of Christian origins, and involves a recognition that Jesus was (as he is presented in Act 2.21) 'a man approved by God' for a special role within the divine purpose, and that the later conception of him as God incarnate, the Second Person of the Holy

Trinity living a human life, is a mythological or poetic way of expressing his significance for us.¹⁰⁰

It should be noted that the concept of Jesus' humanness is not only held by Muslims, but also by the Jews and other early sects of Christianity such as the Ebionites (Nazarenes), the Cerinthians, the Basilidians, and the Goths. They too maintained that Jesus (peace be upon him) was a beloved Prophet of God, and they have not elevated him from his rightful status. Even today there are churches in Asia and Africa, the Unitarian church, and Jehovah's Witnesses who do not worship Jesus as God. It is important to stress here that this is not enough to free them on the Day of Judgment, but they must accept Islam, the Prophet Muhammad, and the last revelation from Allah.

The Truth about 'Sonship'¹⁰¹

In the Bible, the expression of 'Son' has been used to refer to many of the earlier prophets. Israel, for example, was called the "Son of God" in one of the books of Moses, "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord, *Israel is My son*, even My first born." (Exodus 4:22)

100. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 61

101. Compiled from 'My Great Love for Jesus Led Me to Islam'

Also, in the Psalms, the same title was given to David, "I will declare the decree: the Lord had said unto me, *Thou art My Son*, this day have I begotten thee." (Psalms 2:7)

Likewise, in I Chronicles, 22:10, Solomon was called the Son of God: "He shall build a house for My name: and he shall be *My son*, and I will be *his Father* and I will establish the throne of his Kingdom over Israel forever."

From the above statements and for many others in the Bible, it has been established that the word "son" really meant '*nearness to God in love*'. This is ascertained when we see Jesus himself said that every man who did *the will of the Father* in heaven was a Son of God.

Jesus (peace be upon him) was reported to say in the following verses:

"Love your enemies... that ye may be the *children of your Father* who is in Heaven." (Mathew 5:44-45)

"Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the *sons of God*." (Mathew 5:9)

Hence, what made a man worthy of being called the 'Son of God' was a devout life and kind, merciful behaviour.

The Bible proves that Jesus actually rejected being called 'Son of God': "And demons also came out of many, crying, 'You are the Son of God!' *But he rebuked*

them, and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.” (Luke 4:41)¹⁰²

Therefore, in view of the above, there is *no justification to regard Jesus as the Son of God in an exclusive and unique meaning*. When Jesus used the phrase "Son of God", it *meant exactly the same as it meant when it was used for Adam, Israel, David and Solomon*.

The humanness and prophethood of Jesus is affirmed in many verses of the Qur'an to correct the grave mistake of elevating him to the status of God (Allah) or the Son of God (Allah).

In the Qur'an, Allah denies having a son in nine different chapters: 2:116, 10:68, 11:117, 18:4, 19:77, 19:88, 19:91-92, 21:26, 25:2, 39:4, and 72:3. As an example, He says:

[And they say: The All-Merciful has taken unto Himself a son. You have indeed invented a terrible, evil thing, whereby the heavens are nearly torn apart, the earth split asunder, and the mountains full in ruins that they ascribe a son to the All-Merciful. It is not befitting for the All-Merciful to take a son. There is none in the heavens and earth but comes unto the All-

102. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 50

Merciful as a slave. Verily, He has taken account of them all, and numbered them exactly. And every one of them will come to Him alone on the Day of Resurrection.] (Qur'an 19: 88-95)

Allah also says,

[The Christ, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger, who was preceded by many messengers, his mother was a woman attributed with full truth;¹⁰³ they both ate food. See how Allah makes His signs clear to them (people), yet see in what ways they are deluded away from the truth.] (Qur'an 5: 75)

Clearly, the idea that Jesus was God or that he was the son of God is textually weak and logically impossible.

Important note

As a precautionary measure, there are many verses in the Qur'an which also confirm Prophet Muhammad's humanness, in order to prevent his followers from elevating him to a divine or semi-divine status, as happened with Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him).

103. She never claimed that she was a mother of God, or that her son was God. She was a pious, virtuous woman.

For example, in Chapter 18, Allah instructs Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to inform all who hear his message of the following:

[Say: *Indeed, I am only a man like you to whom it has been revealed that your god is only one God (Allah).*] (Qur'an 18: 110)

5. Revival of the doctrine of Jesus' Ascension (negating crucifixion)

Some of the changes that took place were made to Prophet Jesus' message after his ascension are so fundamental that they *strike at the very root of Christianity*. For example, the only two references to the ascension of Jesus that were found in the Gospels of Mark and Luke in the King James Version have now been removed from the Revised Standard Version, edited in 1952. Before the removal of these passages, the relevant verses read as follows:

"So then after the Lord had spoken to them, *he was received up into heaven*, and sat on the right hand of God." (Mark 16:19)

"And it came to pass; while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and *carried up to heaven*." (Luke 24:51)

The relevant verse in the Gospels of Mark has been removed along with a number of other verses that immediately preceded and succeeded it, sixteen verses in total.

Verse 51 of Luke now reads as follows:

“While he blessed them he parted from them.” The words, “carried up to heaven” have been removed.¹⁰⁴

Islam revived the knowledge of Jesus’ ascension.

The Qur’an confirms the earliest scriptures that tell that Allah raised him up to Him when his enemies attempted to crucify him. He replaced him with another person who looked like him, and in fact, it was this person that crucified and died on the cross. To this day, it is thought by Christians that Jesus himself (peace be upon him) was the one who was killed.

Allah says in the Qur’an:

[And they said: We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, Messenger of Allah. But they did not kill him or crucify him, but his likeness appeared to them. Verily, those who are in conflict about him are in doubt. They certainly did not kill him.]

104. Revised Standard Version of the Bible, 1952

Certainly, Allah raised him up, Allah is Almighty and All Wise.] (Qur'an 4: 157-158)

6. Revival of the prohibition of Augury¹⁰⁵

Knowledge of what is going to happen in the future is a unique attribute of Allah alone. No one knows what will happen in the near or far future except Allah. Using augury and witchcraft is prohibited in the revealed scriptures because the one who does it raises himself to the level of Allah in assuming one of His divine attributes.

Forecasting the weather is not considered as part of augury and witchcraft, because weather forecasters depend on physical measures and mathematical calculations, unlike augury and witchcraft, where a person claims that he or she knows what is going to happen in the future, just like Allah. He alone is All-Knowing.

Jesus (peace be upon him) prohibited augury and witchcraft. In Leviticus 19:26, “you shall not eat any flesh with the blood in it. You shall not practice *augury or witchcraft*.”

Islam revived the doctrine which says that Allah alone knows the future. He says:

105. Augury has many meanings, some of which are prognostication, prophecy, and divination. Of course prophecy is a gift that Allah gave to the prophets alone.

[the Unseen is known to Allah only] (Qur'an 10: 20)

He also says:

[Say: None in the heavens and the earth knows the Unseen except Allah, nor can they perceive when they will be resurrected.] (Qur'an 27: 65)

Based on this, Islam strictly prohibits consulting fortune-tellers, clairvoyants, and the like. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: <<If anyone consults a fortune-teller or sooth-sayer, and believes in what he (or she) says; then (that person) has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad.>>103

7. Revival of the prohibition of Witchcraft

Referring to the Old Testament quotation above (Leviticus 19:26), witchcraft is prohibited in the teachings of Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets. The reason behind that is that sorcerers and practitioners of the occult seek satanic assistance to do their magic, which is against the teachings of all the prophets.

Islam revived the prohibition of witchcraft. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: <<Avoid the seven great destructive sins. The Prophet's companions asked: O Allah's messenger, what are they? He (peace be upon him)

said: to worship others besides Allah, **to practice sorcery...**>>¹⁰⁶

8. Revival of the prohibition of harmful practices

Along with the doctrinal teachings about the nature of Allah and Jesus (peace be upon him) that were revived by the religion of Islam, some of the prohibitions pertaining to practices harmful to the individual and/or to society which Jesus and the earlier prophets had taught people were revived as well.

Interest

Upholding the Law, Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) opposed giving or taking of interest because the texts of the Old Testament expressly forbade interest. It is recorded in Deuteronomy 23:19 that, “You shall not lend upon interest to your brother, interest on money, interest upon victuals, interest on anything that is lent for interest.”¹⁰⁷

Islam revived the teaching of Jesus regarding the prohibition of interest:

106. Narrated by Bukhari (2766) and Muslim (89)

107. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 93

[O you who believe, fear Allah and give up interest if you are real believers.] (Qur'an 2: 278)

There is great wisdom in the prohibition of dealing with interest. First, the one who earns income by interest earns it without working for it, whereas in Islam it is strongly encouraged to work for one's living. Second, the one who borrows does so due to a lack of financial resources, but the interest debt creates an even greater burden in that the borrower must repay the principle coupled with hefty interest charges. Third, a system based on interest can lead to inflation, recession and even a complete collapse of financial markets, as we are witnessing in our time. Many nations in both the developed and developing world have become enslaved by the system of usury and interest.

It is undisputed that the 2008-2009 world economic downturn (and possible collapse of many world economies), which started in the United States and spread to Europe and Asia, was caused directly by the excessive lending in amounts several times over the actual worth of the assets in loans, spreading the interest charges over many resold loans, resulting in an exaggerated and unrealistic inflation of the value of the actual money lent. This false representation of reality meant that it would be impossible for most debtors to pay back such loans. God

the Almighty forbade usury in three places in the Qur'ân (2:275-278; 3: 130; and 4: 161).

[Those who devour usury will not stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except like the standing of a person beaten by Satan, leading him to insanity. That is because they [the unbelievers] say: Trading is only like usury –whereas Allah has permitted trading and forbidden usury. So whosoever receives an admonition from his Lord and refrains from usury shall not be punished for the past, his case is for Allah [to judge]; but whoever returns [to usury] such are the dwellers of the Fire– they will abide therein.] (Qur'an 2: 275)

In Islam, the distinction between legitimate (allowed) practices vs. forbidden ones is very clear. Islam permits loans and the borrowing of money, but without interest charges. In fact, it is highly encouraged in the Qur'an to forgive a debt in order to remove the hardship from the one who has borrowed, if he/she is in financial difficulties, whereupon for doing so Allah promises a great reward for the one who is able to make this sacrifice.

Muslims who abide by these rules consequently never suffer negative repercussions, but when human beings do

disobey God Almighty they are engulfed by disastrous results, which may come in the form of health threats, financial collapse, break-up of the social fabric, and much more. So it is clear that Islam warns people about many serious ailments afflicting our societies in this day and age, and it is equally clear that these ailments are recognized by the world community as harmful. This is a powerful sign that Islam is the true religion and that Allah (Hallowed is He) is the true God, the One only Divine Lord and saviour.

Pork

Jesus did not eat pork. He followed the laws of Moses and he did not eat pork at all. Leviticus 11:7-8 says: “And the swine, because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch, they are unclean to you”.¹⁰⁸

Nevertheless, most Christians today eat pork. Islam revived the prohibition of eating the meat of the pig. In the Qur'an, Allah says:

108. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p 83

[He has only forbidden you animals which die naturally [without being ritually slaughtered], blood, the flesh of swine and animals sacrificed for others besides Allah. But if one is forced by necessity and not wilful disobedience nor transgression, then there is no sin on him. Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.] (Qur'an 2: 173)

Consuming blood

Jesus also did not eat anything containing blood, nor did he eat blood. God [Allah] is recorded as having instructed Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) in the Torah, Deuteronomy 12:16: “only you shall not eat the **blood**, you shall pour it upon the earth like water,” and in Leviticus 19:26, “you shall not eat any flesh with the **blood** in it. You shall not practice augury or witchcraft.”¹⁰⁹

This prohibition has been revived in many verses of the Qur'an, one of which says:

[Say: I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to be eaten except animals which die of themselves, blood poured forth and

109. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 84

swine flesh, for they are indeed impure.]¹¹⁰
(Qur'an 6: 145)

Alcoholic drinks

Jesus abstained from alcoholic drinks according to the instructions recorded in Numbers 6:1-4: "And the Lord said to Moses, say to the people of Israel, when either a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of the Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord, he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, he shall drink no vinegar made from wine or strong drink, and shall not drink any juice of grapes or eat grapes fresh or dried. All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is a product of the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins."¹¹¹

Islam revived the prohibition of intoxicants irrevocably. In the Qur'an Allah says:

[O you who believe, intoxicants, gambling, sacrificial altars, and divination are an

110. The Qur'an (2:173) (mentioned earlier) prohibits the meat of the pig (pork, ham, etc.) and the blood of any animal that is lawful to eat. The blood must be drained from the slaughtered animal before preparing the meat for food.

111. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, pp. 85-86

abomination of Satan's handiwork, so avoid them in order to be successful.] (Qur'an 5: 90)

9. Revival of various beneficial practices

Along with the doctrinal teachings about the nature of Allah and Jesus (peace be upon him) that were revived by the religion of Islam, some of the detailed practices pertaining to everyday life which Jesus and the earlier prophets had taught by example were revived as well. To continue our list, the following are a few examples of those teachings.

Ablution before prayer

Prior to making prayer, Jesus used to wash his limbs according to the teachings of the Old Testament. Ablution is a preparation for prayers, and is considered as an act of worship by itself. Moses and Aaron are recorded as doing the same in Exodus 40:30-1, "And he set the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, with which Moses and Aaron and his sons **washed their hands and their feet**...as the Lord commanded Moses."¹¹²

112. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, pp. 86-87

Islam revived ablution

The significance of ablution is evident when we put in mind that it is a preparation for prayer, where worshippers cleanse themselves first before they stand before Allah, the Creator.

Islam revived ablution for prayer in the Qur'an, which says:

[O you who believe, when you intend to pray, wash your faces and forearms up to the elbows, wipe your heads and wash your feet up to the ankles...] (Qur'an 5: 6)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught his followers (by his statements and his example) that ablution includes washing the hands, rinsing the mouth, washing the face, washing the arms, wiping the head, and finally washing the feet.

Performing prayers physically

Jesus (peace be upon him) performed his prayers in a physical manner, not just through supplication. In Mark 14:32, it states: "And they went to a place which was called Gethsemane; and he (Jesus) said to his disciples, 'Sit here, while I pray,'" and in Luke 5:16, "But he withdrew to the wilderness and prayed."

Islam revived prayers as a main act of worship. Allah instructs believers to perform prayers in numerous Qur'anic verses, for example:

[Establish prayer, pay the poor-due, and bow down with those who bow down [in worship]]
(Qur'an 2: 43)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught his followers (by saying and action) that performing prayers includes standing up, bowing down and prostrating. Actually, the manner of prayer in Islam is more in line with what Jesus taught than with what Christians do today. According to Isaiah (45: 21-23), God is reported to have said “To Me every *knee shall bow*.”

Jesus is described in the Gospels as prostrating during prayer. The method of prostration in prayer followed by Jesus was not of his own making. It was the mode of prayer of the prophets before him. In the Old Testament, Genesis 17:3, Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) is recorded to have fallen on his face in prayer; in Numbers 16:22 & 20:6, both Moses and Aaron are recorded to have fallen on their faces in worship; in Joshua 5:14 & 7:6, Joshua fell on his face to the earth in worship; in I Kings 18:42,

Elijah bowed down on the ground and put his face between his knees. This was the way of the prophets.¹¹³

“Christians today kneel down, clasping their hands, in a posture which cannot be ascribed to Jesus or others.”¹¹⁴

In many of his statements, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught his followers the manner of prayer, including bowing down and prostrating one's face to Allah.

Compulsory Charity

Jesus confirmed the institution of compulsory charity known as ‘the tithe (tenth)’, which was required from the annual harvest. “You shall tithe all the yield of your seed, which comes forth from the field year by year.” (Deuteronomy 14:22)¹¹⁵

The Qur'an is a revival of Jesus' teachings. It teaches Muslims to pay the charity at the time of harvest. Allah says,

[It is He who produces trellised and un-trellised gardens, date palms and crops of different

113. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 87-88

114. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, 87

115. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 91

varieties, and olives and pomegranates, similar yet different. Eat of their fruit when they bear, but pay the due charity at the time of harvest¹¹⁶ without being extravagant, for surely He does not like those who are extravagant.] (Qur'an 6: 141)

The system of charity is well organized; it provides different rates for cash, precious metals, various trade goods, agricultural products and cattle.¹¹⁷ The purpose of charity is very well defined; it is to provide social support to the needy people in the community and not to provide comfortable living for priests.¹¹⁸

The categories of those who are eligible to receive such charity are also clearly defined in the Qur'an. (see 9: 60).

In Islam, although the *Zakah* is obligatory, voluntary charity is highly promoted and encouraged. Often, Muslims give from their wealth far more than the obligatory minimum amount, on their own. They do so because charity that is based on sincere intentions

116. The due is one tenth if the field is naturally irrigated, and one twentieth if it is artificially irrigated. This obligatory charity is levied on other material resources, like trade and livestock.

117. For example, the amount of zakah for cash after one year has passed on it (intact) is 2.5%.

118. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 92

promises great rewards for the donor by Allah. In the history of Islam there are many accounts of people who gave their entire wealth to poor, seeking Allah's pleasure through this remarkable act of charity.

Fasting

Allah says in the Qur'an that fasting is enjoined on Muslims as it was enjoined on previous nations.

According to the Gospels, Jesus fasted for forty days. Matthew 4:2 says, "And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry."¹¹⁹ This was in accordance with the practice of the earlier prophets. Moses (peace be upon him) is also recorded in Exodus 34:28 to have fasted. It says, "And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights, he neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments."¹²⁰

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) affirmed that Prophet David (peace be upon him) used to fast regularly; he said: <<The best manner of fasting¹²¹ is that

119. See also Matthew 6:16 & 17:21

120. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 92

121. He meant the voluntary fasting, not the obligatory fast prescribed during

of my brother David, who used to fast every other day.>>¹²²

The Qur'an is a revival of many of the teachings of Jesus and Moses. It teaches the believers to fast the month of Ramadan. It says:

[O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, in order that you may attain consciousness of Allah.]
(Qur'an 2: 183)

Greeting with the supplication of peace

According to Dr. Bilal Philips, Jesus (peace be upon him) greeted his followers by saying, 'Peace be with you'. This greeting was the same as that mentioned in the books of the Old Testament. In 1st Samuel 25:6, Prophet David (peace be upon him) instructed emissaries whom he sent to Nabal: "And thus you shall salute him: "Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have."¹²³

Islam is a religion of peace and respect for others. It revived this noble moral teaching.

the month of Ramadan.

122. Narrated by Bukhari (1131) and Muslim (1159)

123. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 90

The Qur'an instructs all who enter homes to give greeting of peace... God instructs the believers to greet each other with peace:

[When those who believe in My signs come to you, say: Peace be upon you...] (Qur'an 6: 54)¹²⁴

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also taught his followers to say this greeting whenever they met each other. The greeting of peace extends even to heaven as angels greet those who enter paradise with the same greeting of peace.

Veiling (*Hijab*) for women

The women around Jesus veiled themselves according to the practice of women around the earlier prophets. Their garments were loose and covered their bodies completely, and they wore scarves which covered their hair. In Genesis 24:64-65: "And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel, and said to the servant, 'who is the man yonder, walking in the field to meet us?' The servant said, 'It is my master.' So *she took her veil and covered herself.*"¹²⁵

124. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, pp. 90-91

125. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 88

Islam encourages decency. Muslim women are instructed to cover their bodies and wear veils that cover their heads and chests. Allah says:

[Tell the believing women to lower their gaze and protect their private parts and not to expose their adornment, except only what normally appears, and to draw their veils over their bosoms...]
(Qur'an 24: 31)

The wisdom behind veiling is given in Chapter 33, verse 59, where the Qur'an states that it provides women with protection from possible social harm.¹²⁶ In addition, veiling works to discourage males from approaching females with dishonourable intentions.

Polygyny

There is no record of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) opposing polygyny. There are a number of examples of polygamous marriages among the prophets recorded in the Old Testament. Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) had two wives, according to Genesis 16:13, "So after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her maid, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife."

126. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 89-90

So did Prophet David (peace be upon him), according to the first book of Samuel 27:3, “...and David with his two wives, Ahin'o-am of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow.”

In 1 Kings 11:3, *Solomon* is said to have “...had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines.”

According to 2nd Chronicles 11:21, *Solomon's son*, Rehobo'am, had a number of wives. The Old Testament even specified laws regarding the division of inheritance in polygamous circumstances, which indicates that the practice was a normal one in society. (See Deuteronomy 21:15-16)¹²⁷

Islam revived this practice of the earlier prophets, but imposed stringent restrictions on polygyny. It permits marriage to up to four women with strict conditions stipulating justice and equal treatment among one's wives as the basic condition for polygyny. In the Qur'an Allah states:

[Marry those women that please you, two, three or four; but if you fear that you will not be able to deal justly, then [marry only] one.] (Qur'an 4: 3)

127. Source: *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 94

The only restriction on polygamy [polygyny] recorded in earlier scriptural teaching was the ban on taking a wife's sister as a rival wife in Leviticus 18:18.¹²⁸ This law is applied in Islam as well, as is stated in the Qur'an (4: 23).

Circumcision

Jesus (peace be upon him) was circumcised. According to Luke 2:21: "And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb."

According to the Old Testament, Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), who was himself neither a Jew nor a Christian, was the first to be circumcised.

In Genesis 17:9, it is written, "And God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep between me and you and your descendants after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and

128. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 95

you. **He that is eight days old among you shall be circumcised.**”

However, today most Christians are not circumcised because of a rationale introduced by Paul, who claimed that circumcision was the circumcision of the heart. In his letter to the Romans 2:29, he wrote: “He is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart, spirited and not literal.” In his letter to the Galatians 5:2, he wrote: “Now I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you.” This was Paul's false interpretation. Jesus was not circumcised in the heart nor did he say anything about circumcision of the heart, he kept the “everlasting covenant” and was circumcised in the flesh.”¹²⁹

Islam revives circumcision

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was quoted as saying: <<There are five practices which correspond to the natural human inclination: shaving pubic hair and underarm hair, **circumcision**, trimming the moustache, and trimming fingernails and toenails.>>¹³⁰

129. *The True Message of Jesus Christ*, p. 81-82

130. Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, and recorded in all six authentic collections

Conclusion

To conclude, Islam revived the faith of the prophets, which is based upon the belief in one God (Allah), and revived along with belief many rules and practices related to morality, justice, and clean living. Hence, the Islamic way of life is much closer to the way of life of Jesus and the previous prophets (peace be upon them all) than that of any other group of people who claim to be their followers.

XVIII. Features of Islamic Teachings

Allah has made the message of Islam easy to understand and to follow. He annulled some previously prescribed rites and practices while affirming others according to His wisdom. As a result, the Islamic creed and law suit peoples' spiritual, psychological, social and economical needs, for all of humankind and for all eras.

Islamic teachings have the following unique features:

1. Rationality

One should not have to derive the truth from a series of complicated logical proofs, only to arrive at something he or she is unsure of (as is common in other religions or philosophies). When the truth is found, it should be clear and obvious. The truth is so simple that anyone is capable of seeing it, and this is the most compelling feature of Islam.

2. Perfection

Since Allah is perfect, His teachings must also be perfect and free from any contradiction or error. The Qur'an challenges its readers to find any errors in it, if they do not believe it is really from Allah:

[Will they read the Qur'an prudently? Had it been from other than Allah, they would have found many contradictions in it.] (Qur'an 4: 82)

Dr. Maurice Bucaille, a French Christian physician, found many scientific facts mentioned in the Qur'an that were not known by humans at the time that the verses of the Qur'an were being conveyed by Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him to those around him. Bucaille wrote, "I could not find a single error in the Qur'an."¹³¹

3. Clarity

Allah is the Most Compassionate. He therefore guides people through clear and simple revelation free of myths, superstitions and mysteries.

4. Scientific validity and accuracy

It is not surprising to find in the Qur'an and statements of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) information which has only recently been discovered by modern science. This indicates that the Qur'an is the word of Allah and that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is His Prophet. On the other hand, the religious views which the church presented concerning God, the Bible, and the individual's relation to God forced people into an

131. *The Qur'an and Modern Science*, by Maurice Bucaille, IIPH

unfortunate choice: either science or God. Most educated people have come to the conclusion that one cannot be a scientist or an educated person and be a true Christian at the same time. Many philosophers, scientists and the majority of lay people lost hope of reconciling religion and science; thus the ideology of secularism was developed. This dichotomy would not have arisen if the original Gospel which was revealed to Jesus (peace and blessings be upon him) had not been distorted. Islam, the pure religion, raises no contradiction whatsoever between religion and science. This is naturally obvious because both religion and true scientific knowledge are from the same source: Allah, who does not contradict Himself.¹³²

5. Prophetic fulfilment

Many of the events prophesied in the Qur'an and in the Prophet's statements have come to pass. This is further proof that Islam is not a man-made religion, because it is unimaginable for an uneducated man who was living isolated from other civilizations to make up such prophecies.

132. For more information on the many scientific facts that are referenced in the Qur'an see *The Qur'an and Modern Science*, by Dr. Maurice Bucaille and *A Brief Illustrated Guide to Understanding Islam*, by I. A. Ibrahim, IIPH, also available at www.islam-guide.com.

6. Moderation

In Islam, there is no conflict between spiritual and worldly life. Rather, it provides a balance between all aspects of human life, taking into account the needs and wants of individuals and society. Therefore, secularism, materialism, monasticism and extreme asceticism are all rejected in Islam, which provides a middle way to achieve harmony and balance between the spiritual and material needs of people. This is why Allah called the Muslim Nation in the Qur'an the [*moderate nation*]. (2: 143)

7. Comprehensiveness

Islamic teachings provide people with definite guidelines to follow in all aspects of life: spiritual, individual, social, moral, political, economical, and so on.

8. Uniqueness

For anyone who claimed that Islam was man-made, Allah challenges them to [*produce the like thereof*]. Indeed, the entire Qur'an—its language, its elegance, its miraculous nature—is unparalleled. The ancient non-Muslim Arabs tried to construct a verse yet failed, even though their language and poetry was very highly developed in that era. Even many recent non-Muslim scholars admit that the Qur'an is one of the greatest books known to humankind. This point ultimately leads to the

fact that Muhammad [peace be upon him (the illiterate)] was a true prophet to whom the Qur'an was revealed.

9. Justice

All of humankind descended from one man and one woman (Adam and Eve). Islam teaches that the criterion by which each human being is judged is righteousness, not the colour of one's skin or one's status in society. The best person in the view of Allah is the most righteous. A verse of the Glorious Qur'an reads:

[The best of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most righteous.] (Qur'an 49: 13)

XIX. Islam, the Universal Religion

Islam is a universal message to all of humankind and for all times, until the Day of Judgment, whereas every other prophet was sent to his own people, and for a limited time period. Prophet Jesus' mission was limited to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel."¹³³ Muhammad peace be upon him was sent for everyone: male or female, rich or poor, Arab or non-Arab, slave or freeborn. Islam can be practiced anywhere on earth; it is not tied to locality or culture. So if you are not from the tribes of Israel (the descendants of the twelve sons of Prophet Jacob) as in the case of Indians, Asians, Africans, indigenous peoples and Europeans; and you are a Christian; then you are following a prophet (Jesus) and a message which was not meant for you. This means you are not on the right track!

133. Matthew 15:24

XX. Why Islam?

Every person should return to Islam because it is the birthright of every person and the original print on every human soul when he or she was born.

Every person should return to Islam because Allah has sealed and superseded all previous messages with Islam. Allah says to all people in the Qur'an:

[This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.] (Qur'an 5: 3)

Every person should return to Islam because people in every age must worship their Lord (Allah) according to the Law prescribed by Him as revealed to His Prophet. The tribes of Israel, for example, were ordered to worship Allah according to the Law of Moses (peace be upon him). When Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was sent to them, they were ordered to worship Allah according to what was prescribed in the Gospel. Then, when Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) with the message of Islam to all people, it became incumbent on all people, **the tribes of Israel and all others**, to enter Islam.

After all, what could be more serious than the rejection of the religion which the Creator and Sustainers of everything has enjoined upon all people? Indeed this is the greatest injustice committed by human beings. It is sad but true that if a person dies in this state, then he or she will be punished and cast into the hellfire to live there for eternity. This concept is emphasized hundreds of times in the Qur'an and in the statements of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah says in the Qur'an:

[If anyone desires a religion other than Islam, never will it be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he will be among the losers.] (Qur'an 3: 85)

Also, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: <<Whoever among the Christians and Jews hears of me and does not follow what I have brought, and dies in this state will be among the inhabitants of hellfire.>>¹³⁴

Note that Allah was reported to have said in the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18, "If anyone does not listen to My words that the prophet speaks in My name, I Myself will call him to account." (Deuteronomy 18:19)

134. Narrated by Muslim (153)

Having proved that the prophet referred to here is Muhammad (peace be upon him), this means that whoever believes in the Bible must believe in this prophet and in what this prophet says, or he will be called to account for that. After the realization of who this prophet is, it follows logically that one must adhere to the teachings of this very prophet.

There are those who may not accept Islam because they think that becoming a Muslim means to turn one's back on all previous prophets sent by Allah. This is a false concept because of the following:

First, the belief in all messengers of Allah is a pillar of Islamic faith and hence, no Muslim is a believing Muslim if he does not believe in Jesus, Moses or any other prophet.

Second, belief in the messengers is a part of what each messenger taught (that is, every prophet called his people to believe in the next prophet who comes after him and follow him whenever he appears). So, rejecting a prophet amounts to rejecting the predecessor.

Third, rejecting any messenger amounts to rejecting the One Who sent him: Allah.

Fourth, Islam promises the followers of previous faiths great rewards if they add belief in Islam to belief in

their previous faith. The Messenger of Allah, (peace be upon him) said: <<Three people have a double reward: a person from the people of the scriptures (the Jews and Christians) who believed in his prophet (Jesus or Moses) and then believes in the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him (by embracing Islam)...>>¹³⁵ That is, the first reward for believing in his/her faith before s/he knew about Islam and the second reward for recognizing the truth and believing in Islam.

Hence, the Islamic perspective on the relationship between the messengers is like the relationship between the links in a chain, where rejecting one of them amounts to rejecting all of them. Therefore, becoming a Muslim means having the honour of believing in all the prophets who came before Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and not turning one's back on any previous prophets.

Finally, we have to accept Islam because Islam revived the eternal divine teachings that had been either forgotten or distorted from their mention in the previous messages. Islam retains and maintains the practical teachings mentioned in the previous scriptures that are part of the birthright of all people till the end of this world.

135. Narrated by Bukhari (97)

XXI. A Final Call to Reason

A concluding suggestion: consider what everyone has in common. Come, let us reason together,

*[Say: O People of the Book, come to common terms between us and you: that we worship none but Allah, that we associate no partners with Him, that we do not set up, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah. If then they turn back, say: **bear witnesses that we (at least) are Muslims.**]* (Qur'an 3: 64)

"People of the Book" is the respectful title given to the Jews and the Christians in the Noble Qur'an. The Muslims are here commanded to invite them with noble and respectful words: O People of the Book, O Learned People, O People who claim to be the recipients of Divine Revelation of a Holy Scripture, let us gather together onto a common platform: that we worship none but Allah, because none but Allah is worthy of worship, because He is our Lord and Cherisher, our Sustainer and Evolver, worthy of all praise, prayer and devotion.

These truths are basic and an integral part of any human being's intellect. Sort through the layers of indoctrination which hide this simple fact, and one will be

able to see that deep down, every human being retains the simple and obvious concept of Allah. In essence, every human being agrees that there is only One God worthy of worship, One God who is free of partners, helpers, or anything that is ascribed to Him falsely. In essence, every human being is in agreement.

XXII. To Sum it up

The following twenty-five facts were discussed in this book:

First, the purpose of creation is to worship Allah alone.

Second, the basic message of Islam is to worship Allah alone without any intercessor or mediator. Any form of worship that is not dedicated to Allah alone, will be rejected as one form of polytheism (*shirk*), which amounts to apostasy from the Islamic point of view.

Third, the evidence that only Allah has the right to be worshipped was elaborated.

Fourth, the message of false religions is paganism (the worship of creatures, rather than the Creator).

Fifth, Allah and His creation are totally different entities. He is One, distinct from His creations.

Sixth, both the divine origin of the name of the religion 'Islam' and the comprehensiveness of its meaning point to its truth.

Seventh, Islam's basic principles and characteristics point to its truth.

Eighth, the truth of every religion relies on the accuracy with which the original revelation from Allah was preserved. This rule is only satisfied by Islamic teachings. The Qur'an is the final word of Allah which has been preserved throughout the ages. Hence, it supersedes all previous scriptures.¹³⁶

Ninth, Islam is the final religion, and intended for all humankind. All people therefore have an obligation to embrace it.

Tenth, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent to all people. He is the last Prophet and his teaching, Islam, will remain as the only correct and authentically revealed teaching until the Day of Judgment.

Eleventh, Islam is uniquely rational, simple and uncomplicated. It rejects all forms of polytheism and false beliefs.

Twelfth, prophets are human beings sent by Allah to convey and revive the original message: worship of Allah alone (Monotheism) and being careful not to worship anything other than Him. Prophets are only human beings

136. It shall be noted that those who followed the scriptures when they were in their pure, unadulterated forms are considered to be on the right religion, and will have nothing to fear on the Day of Judgment.

sent by Allah to be examples of how the scriptures were to be understood and implemented.

Thirteenth, Mary, the mother of Jesus, was a virtuous woman, honoured above the women of all nations in that time.

Fourteenth, Islam is the only religion today that teaches the right concept of Allah, free of any confusion or irrational facts.

Fifteenth, it has been proved that the Bible is widely distorted; this implies that Christianity has been distorted as well, as is evident from several doctrines introduced by humans into Christianity that resulted in its deviation from pure monotheism into tri-theism within the first 400 years after Jesus' ascension.

Sixteenth, Islam is a restatement of the basic message of all religions: worship Allah alone. It is the last religion for all people and for all times. So, whether they were raised as Jews, Christians, Hindus, atheists, or with any other creed, everyone, once they hear about it should follow it, become a Muslim and pronounce the testimony right away, without further delay; and whoever rejects it then it means that he or she has rejected the message of Allah, and accordingly will be cast into hell. Such a person

cannot expect guidance, for s/he has deliberately renounced guidance.

Seventeenth, it is evidenced in many places in the Old and New Testaments that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was mentioned by his illustrious predecessors, namely the Prophets Jesus and Moses (may Allah's blessings be upon them all). With this decisive and factual evidence, it is only befitting that sincere Christians and Jews accept Islam as a continuation of the prophetic legacy left by all the messengers and prophets. As such, they should enter Islam's fold wholeheartedly.

Eighteenth, indeed, Islam is the only religion that fights extremism—whether that extremism comes from secularism and materialism or from excessive spiritualism. Islam ensures a balance between spiritual, moral and materialistic needs. It is truly the middle path and is a perfectly balanced way of life. This should not be surprising because Islamic teachings are not manmade, but have been revealed to humanity by Allah the Creator, the Most Wise, the Most Knowledgeable.

Nineteenth, oral traditions passed on for generations were substantially changed from the original message. People who had not seen Jesus (peace be upon him) began to write books focusing on his personality more than his

message. These articles became overly exaggerated, losing the true essence of his existence and message. They exalted him to extreme heights. This then posed a problem for Christianity as divisions in the doctrine arose, with each group espousing their own theories and explanations. This resulted in variant notions of the crucifixion, the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, the divine 'sonship' of Christ, original sin, and atonement. The following cardinal doctrines of Christianity are rejected by Islam:

- ❖ The Trinity
- ❖ The divinity of Jesus (peace be upon him)
- ❖ The notion that Jesus is the son of God.
- ❖ Original sin
- ❖ Atonement (reconciliation between God and humankind brought about by the life and death of Jesus)
- ❖ Redemption (salvation from sin through Jesus' sacrifice)

Twentieth, the reality of the prophets, their uniform message, and the way of life is revived and can only be found preserved in Islamic teachings, manifested in the Qur'an and the statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They are the only authentic and proven resource documents today which

preserve the facts about Jesus, Moses and their messages. They guide those who follow these sources to a way of life which is more consistent with the way of life of Jesus and Moses than that practiced by most Christians and Jews themselves. They guide to the love and respect of both of them, and of all the prophets.

Twenty-first, the way to please Allah has been detailed for us. The Qur'an defines it clearly and the Prophet (peace be upon him) gives us details at every point.

Twenty-second, Islam considers any disrespect of any prophet as stepping out from the boundaries of Islam.

Twenty-third, the popular Christian concept of salvation is inaccurate. The true way to achieve salvation is to do good deeds and to avoid and repent from sins, and to follow the commandments mentioned in the scriptures, sealed and superseded by the Qur'an. Islam teaches that sin cannot be transferred from person to person or inherited. Each person is accountable for his/her own deeds and will be rewarded accordingly.

Allah says in the Qur'an:

[And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer,¹³⁷ those

137. Believing in the six pillars of faith mentioned earlier

will enter paradise and will not be wronged (even so much as) the speck on a date seed.] (Qur'an 4: 124)

Twenty-fourth, God (Allah) is One, His message is one, and the way to Him is one: namely Islam. Allah says in the Qur'an:

[Verily, this is My way leading straight, so follow it, and do not follow other paths, as they will scatter you from His right path; this is His commandment to you, that you may be righteous.] (Qur'an 6: 153)

Last but not least, Islam is your birthright. Yes, you read correctly. Islam is your *right*. Every human being was born into the religion of Islam and human beings are naturally drawn to what they already know.

These are the twenty-five basic components which logically and rationally dictate that Islam be considered the last and true religion of Allah, so all people should follow it.

XXIII. This is it

In this book you have been shown the right path, and Allah has given you the ability to distinguish right from wrong, and the freedom of choice whether to accept the message of Islam or not. If you accept His call, then you will be warmly welcomed into paradise. If you reject it, you will end up with the biggest loss ever imagined: the loss of paradise and the guarantee of abiding in hellfire for all eternity. Take a moment to comprehend what *eternity* really means. It is a very frightening realisation.

To those who have been faithful Christians, you are warmly welcomed to embrace Islam because:

- ❖ Jesus asked his followers to follow Muhammad whenever he appeared;
- ❖ And when Jesus comes back before the end of this world, he will follow Muhammad and abide by his teachings.

Yes, since Jesus (Peace be upon him) called to it when he was on earth, and will follow Islam when he comes back, and because he called his true followers to follow it; then the faithful Christian should follow Islam as well.

To those who have been believing Jews, remember that Abraham and Moses surrendered themselves completely to their Lord, whether they called Him Elohenu, God, or Allah. All pride in ethnicity or ancestry is vain: what will matter in the end is your individual relationship with your Creator. This means total submission—Islam.

To those of other faiths, or who until now did not feel that they had any faith at all, consider this message NOW, without any reluctance or hesitation, before it is too late. *Before DEATH overtakes you.* It can be soon. Who knows?

XXIV. Remember this

Some people are not able to find the truth because of their blind commitment to their beliefs. Their tenacious adherence is usually not based on an intellectual understanding of the teachings, but on powerful cultural and emotional influences. Because they were brought up in a particular family or society, they firmly cling to the beliefs of that group, believing that they are upholding the truth.

To accurately identify the true religion, an objective point of view must be maintained which does not allow our emotions to cloud our vision and thereby blind us to the truth. Indeed, we must look at all issues rationally so that we can separate the truth from falsehood, then judge it and follow it, with sincere prayers to the Almighty to guide us to the right path.

Being presented with the previous proofs, whoever has a sane intellect can analyze and reason; a crossroads has been reached, in which Allah (Glorified be He) calls all people to follow the clear, straight road and avoid all the foggy, zigzagging ones. The right path has now become distinct from the wrong path, as Allah says in the Qur'an (2: 256).

[There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in false gods and believes in Allah, then he [or she] has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.]

It is my duty and responsibility as a member of this great planet, and as one who has submitted my free will to the Law and Commandments of the Supreme Being, to urge all human beings to stay away from the worship of false deities, to stop putting their faith in statues, sphinxes, figures, amulets, talismans, horseshoes, and any other objects that have been manufactured by humans or created by God. After repentance, a person should submit completely to the Will of Allah, the Only God of the Universe.

No matter how much money, prestige, position, and power that an unbeliever might have possessed in this life, he or she will never have enough to buy his or her entrance to paradise. In the hereafter, the poorest from among the inhabitants of earth who had testified to the truth of Islam will be far happier and more dignified than the richest person who did not accept the message of Islam.

Rejecting Allah's message is the biggest sin that one can commit. For this reason, while the soul of an unbeliever is still in his or her body, the wise man/woman should quickly utilize the occasion that he/she is still alive to accept Allah's message before it is too late. The time for repentance is limited. Once death arrives, it is no longer possible to obtain forgiveness.¹³⁸ Allah says in the Qur'an:

[When death comes to the person he will say: O my Lord, send me back [to life] that I may do righteous deeds [in the times that I wasted]. No, it is a word he says.¹³⁹] (Qur'an 23: 100)

As religion is without question the most important aspect of a person's life because it impacts whether a person is rightly guided or not, it follows therefore that choosing the true faith is the most important personal decision one must make, and this decision needs to be based on clarity and total conviction. When it comes to matters of religion and creed, absolutely nothing must be left to chance, because one who is truly guided—as opposed to one who is not—will surely find eternal happiness in the hereafter!

138. Compiled from 'My Great Love for Jesus Led Me to Islam'

139. So the unbeliever will ask for a 'second chance' when he or she sees the angels ready to punish him/her, but it is too late; s/he was given the time, the intellect and the guidance, but s/he neglected it for years till time ran out.

As you have read this book, “Islam is Your Birthright”, and examined the evidence therein on the truthfulness of Islam, I pray to God Almighty that you can and would make the right choice! I invite you to choose Islam as your way of life so you get on the right path! *Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh* (there is no deity but Allah), *Muhammad rasoolu Allâh* (Muhammad is Allah’s Messenger).

How to become a Muslim

Every religion has its own requirements for conversion: If someone wants to become Jewish, he/she needs to be able to pledge all of the following:

- 1) To enter the ‘eternal covenant’ between God and the people of Israel and to become a Jew of his/her own free will;
- 2) To accept Judaism to the exclusion of all other religious faiths and practices, which means to deny the prophethood of Jesus and of Muhammad and to deny the revelations that God sent to humankind through them;
- 3) To pledge undivided loyalty to Judaism and to the Jewish people under all circumstances;

- 4) To commit to learning the Torah and Jewish knowledge; and
- 5) To raise his/her children as Jews.

To be a Christian one must:

- 1) Believe that God (Allah) has a partner, a mother, and a son;
- 2) believe that every newborn baby is born sinful;
- 3) believe that God became a man and descended to earth to die for the sins of people;
- 4) Deny the prophethood of Muhammad to all people; and
- 5) Deny that the Qur'an is revelation from Allah.

However, to become a Muslim is simple:

- 1) Bear witness that no one deserves worship except Allah (disown all false gods);
- 2) Bear witness that Muhammad is His messenger;
- 3) Believe in the six articles of faith; and
- 4) Worship Allah as taught by Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him).

May the light of truth shine in our minds and in our hearts. May it lead us to peace and certitude in this life and eternal bliss in the hereafter.

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Appendix

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You may also wish to visit the following web sites for up-to-date information and a wealth of reading material:

Online information about Islam:

www.islamfortoday.com

www.islam-guide.com

www.islamonline.net

www.islamtomorrow.com

www.missionislam.com

Online bookstores:

www.al-hidaayah.co.uk

www.dar-us-salam.com

www.iiphonline.com

www.soundvision.com

Glossary of Islamic Terms

<i>Allâhu akbar</i>	الله أكبر	Allah is the Greatest.
<i>Bismillâh</i>	بسم الله	in the name of Allah
<i>Dajjâl</i>	الدجال	Antichrist
<i>Da'wah</i>	دعوة	disseminating the teachings of Islam and calling people to accept and embrace Islam
<i>Hadith (hadeeth)</i>	حديث	the collected statements and actions of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) that with the Qur'an form the basis of Islamic law
<i>Hajj</i>	حج	the major pilgrimage to the Sacred Mosque, site of the Ka'bah at Makkah, to be undertaken by every able Muslim once in his/her lifetime
<i>Jizyah</i>	جزية	a tax levied on the people of the Scriptures when they are under the protection of a Muslim government.

<i>Kaaba (Ka'bah)</i>	الكعبة	the House of Allah in Makkah, originally built by Prophets Ibrâheem and Ismâ'eel
<i>Ramadan</i>	رمضان	the ninth month in the Islamic calendar; the month of obligatory fasting
<i>Sharia (shari'ah)</i>	شريعة	Islamic law derived from the Qur'an and the statements and actions of the Prophet.
<i>Zakât (zakâh)</i>	زكاة	obligatory charity: an 'alms tax' on wealth payable by Muslims and to be distributed to poor Muslims who qualify as recipients.